MONDAY
January 12, 2026

BENGALURU
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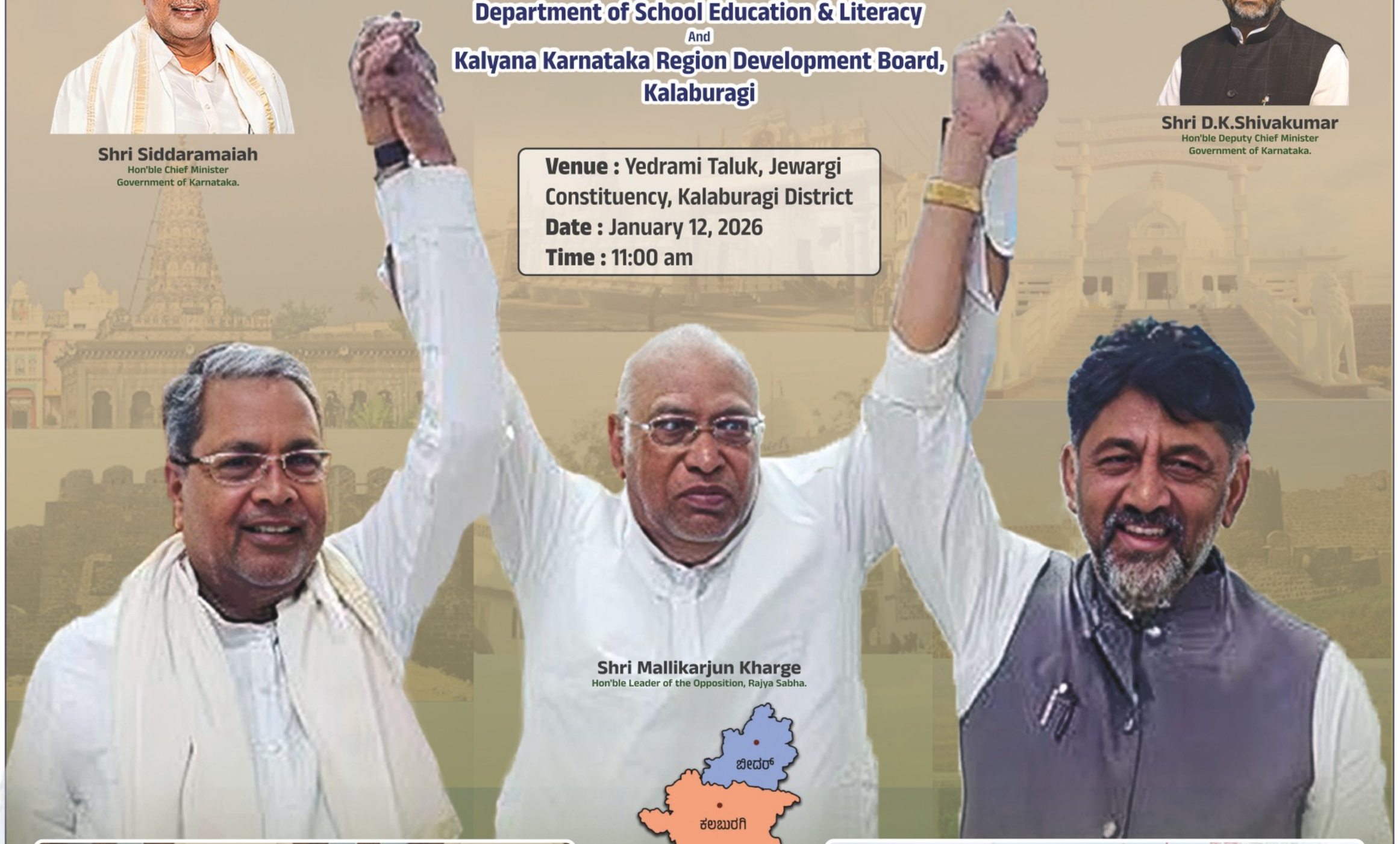
Shri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Government of Karnataka.

Government of Karnataka
Department of Revenue &
Department of School Education & Literacy
And
Kalyana Karnataka Region Development Board, Kalaburagi

Venue : Yedrami Taluk, Jewargi Constituency, Kalaburagi District
Date : January 12, 2026
Time : 11:00 am

Shri D.K.Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister
Government of Karnataka.



Shri Mallikarjun Kharge
Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition, Rajya Sabha.

Hon'ble Minister for Revenue, Shri Krishna Byregowda; Hon'ble Minister for Rural Development and Panchayat Raj, IT & BT and Kalaburagi District In-charge Minister, Shri Priyank Kharge; Hon'ble Minister for Planning and Statistics, Shri D. Sudhakar; and Chairman, KKRDB, Dr. Ajay Dharam Singh, during an official review meeting on the Praja Soudha developmental initiatives in the Kalyana Karnataka Region.

Hon'ble Minister for the School Education & Literacy, Shri Madhu Bangarappa; Hon'ble Minister for Medical Education and Skill Development, Entrepreneurship and Livelihood, Dr.Sharanaprakash R Patil; and Chairman, KKRDB, Dr. Ajay Dharam Singh, during an official review meeting on the educational initiatives under the Akshara Aavishkara programme in the Kalyana Karnataka Region.

New Praja Soudha Projects in Kalyana Karnataka region

₹163.55 Crore Investment
for construction of
New Praja Soudha Buildings
(Public Administrative Buildings)

Approval of 300 New Karnataka Public Schools in Kalyana Karnataka region

₹600-₹900 Crore Investment for construction of
300 New Karnataka Public Schools
200 Schools funded by KKRDB
100 Schools funded by the Education Department

Foundation stone laying is being undertaken for various developmental projects in Yedrami and Jewargi taluks, involving an expenditure of **₹879.16 Crore** across **96** works,

Extending Our Heartfelt Welcome To Everyone.

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'OBSTRUCTION OF RAIDS'

ED moves SC, seeks CBI probe into action

NEWS » PAGE 13

FINAL CHECKS

Countdown begins for launch of PSLV-C62

NEWS » PAGE 14

BIG ATTACK

U.S. launches strikes on IS targets in Syria

WORLD » PAGE 16

DATA POINT

Active educational loan accounts fall drastically in T.N.

About 3 lakh accounts active in 2025-2026

OPINION » PAGE 11

DRAWING FIRST BLOOD

Kohli leads the way as India aces big chase

SPORT » PAGE 17

Centre to seek source code of smartphones in 'security measure'

Tech firms object to 'vulnerability analysis' standards, which include access to confidential information and 'automatic malware scanning'

Reuters
NEW DELHI

The Centre is considering legally imposing a set of requirements for smartphone makers in Indian markets as part of a raft of "security measures", prompting behind-the-scenes opposition from tech giants such as Apple and Samsung.

Among the most sensitive requirements for "vulnerability analysis" in the new Indian Telecom Security Assurance Requirements, drafted in 2023, is access to source code – the underlying programming instructions that make phones work and closely guarded by the manufacturers. This will be analysed and possibly tested at designated Indian labs.

The proposals require automatic and periodic malware scanning on phones and storing of records of a phone's activities in the device for at least a year. IT Ministry and tech executives will meet on Tuesday for more discussions, sources said.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

Surveillance tools

The Indian Telecom Security Assurance Requirements propose 83 security standards including **source code disclosure** for smartphone manufactures in Indian markets

Gray area: Tech companies say the proposal lacks any global precedent.

- **Background permission restriction:** Apps cannot access cameras, microphones or location services in the background when phones are inactive
- **One-year log retention:** Devices must store security audit logs for 12 months
- **Informing govt. of major updates:** Phone makers must notify a govt. body before releasing any major updates or security patches

Language row: Authority seeks explicit exclusion of Kannada linguistic minority areas in Bill

Sharath S. Srivatsa
BENGALURU

A day after Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan sought to allay fears of Kannada linguistic minority in Kerala about the Malayalam Bhasha Bill 2025, the Karnataka Border Area Development Authority (KBADA) has said that the Bill should explicitly exempt linguistic minority areas (parts of Kasaragod district) in the mandatory Malayalam first language clause – allowing Kannada to remain the first language, and also remove the inherent contradictions in the Bill.

While Mr. Vijayan on Saturday pointed out provisions in Clause 7 of the Bill to allay fears of the Kannada-speaking population, the authority pointed out contradictions in the provisions that was also leading to confusion.

The assessment of the Karnataka government was that under the proposed legislation, those studying in Kannada medium would also need to study Malayalam as a compulsory subject/first language, affecting those who are unfamiliar with that language.

A Karnataka Border Area Development Authority delegation met Kerala Governor Rajendra Arlekar in Kasaragod recently. FILE PHOTO

Academic performance

It could affect the academic performance adversely and Kannada's primacy would also get eroded over time. It may disrupt existing set-ups where Kannada was the first language, sources aware of the assessment said.

This comes amidst concerns aired by Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah over the adverse effects of the Bill on the Kannada-speaking population in Kerala.

The sources said that the Kerala government through the Bill should accelerate declaration of specific taluks in Kasaragod district as minority areas under the Bill and secure full benefit of Clause 7 in it that provided for bilingual signboards and teachers' appointments in Kannada, among others.

The authority chairman Somanna Bevinamarad is learnt to have echoed similar sentiments.

An estimate puts the Kannada-speaking people in Kasargod to be more than 70% of the population.

Contradictions

According to Prakash Matthihalli, secretary of the authority, despite protections in Clause 7 (special provisions regarding linguistic minorities) in the Bill, there were contradictions and difficulties in implementation.

He said that while Clause 6(1) mandated Malayalam as the compulsory first language in all government and aided schools in Kerala up to 10th standard, Clause 7(1) provided for communication of all letters and transactions in local offices in the local language.

"However, as per Clause 7(2) students whose mother tongue is any language other than Malayalam may pursue their studies in the languages of their choice that are available in the schools. When the second language English is compulsory in national education curriculum in Kerala, how can a student opt Kannada as first language when Clause 6(1) says Malayalam is mandatory across the State?"

Further, Clause 7(3) that spoke of students from other States and foreign countries whose mother tongue was not Malayalam, provided for exemption only in 9th and 10th standards. "Clause 7 should explicitly specify the exemption to linguistic minorities areas."

Mr. Matthihalli said the Karnataka government had no problem with the Bill if the ambiguities in the provisions were cleared and it exempted the Kannada-speaking regions.

Frozen flow

Winter hotspot: Tourists brave the cold to take in the sight of a frozen waterfall in the Drung area of Tangmarg, 45 km from Srinagar, on Sunday. Cold wave conditions in Kashmir intensified as minimum temperature settled several degrees below the freezing point. IMRAN NISSAR

Police arrest Kerala MLA over fresh charges of rape

The Hindu Bureau
PALAKKAD/
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

In a pre-dawn swoop, a Kerala State Police Crime Branch team searched a hotel in Palakkad around 45 minutes past Saturday midnight, and arrested Rahul Mamkootathil, local MLA, on charges of rape.

Officials said that a third "me-too" disclosure, received by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's office and processed in secret by the police over the past few weeks, enabled investigators to legally bypass the interim protection from arrest that the MLA had obtained from the High Court in two comparable cases registered last year.

Rahul Mamkootathil

The Crime Branch team took Mr. Mamkootathil for questioning to an armed police camp in Pathanamthitta. Later, the police produced the legislator before a local magistrate on charges of rape, intimidation, and coercing the victim to terminate her pregnancy. The magistrate remanded him in judicial custody till January 25. Subsequently, the police lodged Mr. Mamkootathil in a sub-jail in Mavelikkara, Alappuzha district, amid aggressive street protests by DYFI and BJP Yuva Morcha leaders demanding the MLA's resignation.

The Kerala Assembly Speaker has said that his office would seek legal opinion on the MLA's disqualification.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

NEARBY

Local body polls: BJP central leaders for pact

BENGALURU
Amid public rhetoric by BJP and Janata Dal (Secular) leaders over the fate of alliance in the election to the local bodies, the possibility of the two parties going to polls together instead of "friendly fights" at the ward level has not been ruled out. » PAGE 6

Governor has not returned hate speech Bill: CM

MANGALURU
Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said on Sunday that Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot has not returned the Karnataka Hate Speech and Hate Crimes (Prevention) Bill. The Governor has neither rejected nor approved the Bill, he said.
» PAGE 6

High command will decide on my future: DKS

BENGALURU
Amid the power struggle for the Chief Minister's post, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Sunday expressed confidence that the Congress would take a decision about his future. "I am confident that the party will take a decision going forward. I have taken many blows in politics," he said. » PAGE 6

EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGE 5

Iranian President slams U.S. and Israel as protests continue

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

In his first remarks after three nights of intensified protests, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Sunday said "rioters" should not be allowed to disrupt society.

Protests in Iran initially sparked by anger over the rising cost of living have lasted two weeks now. The President's statement came as warnings grew that authorities were committing a "massacre" to quell the demonstrations.

Mr. Pezeshkian, in an interview with state TV on Sunday, said "protesting is the people's right", but echoed authorities in drawing a line between outcry over Iran's dire economy and "rioters".

Large crowds have gathered across the country, chanting anti-government slogans despite an Internet blackout that rights groups say is being used to obscure a deadly crackdown by security forces. The country's state TV has aired images of buildings, including a mosque, on fire, with authorities saying members of the security forces have been killed.

Mr. Pezeshkian accused the U.S. and Israel of "trying to escalate this unrest with regard to the economic discussion and solutions we are working on".

FULL REPORT ON » PAGE 16

PM urges investors to seize India opportunities

Abhinay Deshpande
RAJKOT

India is the world's fastest-growing economy and is rapidly on course to become the third largest globally, amid rising international expectations for the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday after inaugurating the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference for the Saurashtra and Kutch regions in Rajkot.

Amid great global uncertainty, he said, India is witnessing an era of unprecedented certainty. "In recent years, India has made rapid progress, and Gujarat has played a significant role in this. India is rapidly moving towards becoming the world's third-largest economy," Mr. Modi said.

Calling upon investors to seize the opportunities available in Gujarat and across the country, the Prime Minister said if they missed out by arriving late, they should not blame him.

He said inflation was under control, and highlighted India's position as the world's largest producer of milk, vaccines, and several other products, including automobiles.

The Prime Minister said that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had recognised the country as a key engine of global economic growth.

He added that India had been the largest consumer of data globally, while the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) had emerged as the world's top real-time digital payment platform. He said the expanding new middle class and their growing purchasing power were among the major factors that had made India a country of immense possibilities.

Temple visit: Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the 'Somnath Swabhiman Parv' at the Somnath temple on Sunday. DPR PMO/PTI

"There was a time when India imported mobile phones. Today, we are the world's second-largest manufacturer of mobile handsets," he said.

More than 1,500 memorandums of understanding are expected to be signed at the event, with over 110 international buyers from 16 countries, including the U.S. and several from Europe, participating.

'History of resilience'

Earlier in the day, at Somnath, Mr. Modi said the forces that had opposed the reconstruction of the Somnath temple in Gujarat after Independence were still active, and India needed to remain alert, united and powerful to defeat them. The history of Somnath was one of resilience and triumph, not destruction and defeat, he said, adding that while fundamentalist invaders had been relegated to the pages of history, the Somnath temple continued to stand tall.

He was speaking at the "Somnath Swabhiman Parv", organised to mark 1,000 years since Mahmud of Ghazni's attack on the Somnath temple in 1026.

Despite repeated attempts to destroy it over the centuries, the Somnath temple today stands as a powerful symbol of resilience, faith and national pride, restored to its ancient glory through collective resolve and effort, he said.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

Blending impact, prolificity and consistency to an incredulous nicety

Padikkal, after a steady start to the domestic season in the Ranji Trophy and 20-over Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, has been in remarkable form in the ongoing 50-over Vijay Hazare Trophy; he has already smashed four centuries in five innings on his way to a country-high 640 runs at the conclusion of the league phase

R. Kaushik

If it were humanly possible, Devdutt Padikkal would unblinkingly package the last two and a half weeks into tiny capsules that he can gorge on for the rest of his cricketing career. After all, it has been a bountiful phase, the very definition of a purple patch that sportspersons dream of but seldom experience.

In the said period, the sinewy left-hander from Karnataka has taken his game to a different level - stratospheric? - by marrying impact, prolificity and consistency to an incredulous nicety. Having made a steady start to the domestic season in the Ranji Trophy and in the 20-over Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy where he was one of the few bright spots in what was otherwise a miserable campaign for his team, Padikkal ramped it up a fair few notches in the 50-over Vijay Hazare Trophy, smacking four centuries in five innings on his way to a country-high 640 runs at the conclusion of the league phase.

The 25-year-old knows that an average of 91.42 at a strike-rate of 102.56, extraordinary as they are, will count for little when his team runs into perennial domestic powerhouses Mumbai in the knockout quarterfinal on Monday morning in the city which is his home. The Centre of Excellence in the outskirts of Bengaluru doesn't encourage spectators to partake of the entertainment, so in one way it is an anti-climactic homecoming for Padikkal. But domestic players, even those who have had a taste of international cricket, are accustomed to playing in front of the proverbial two people and their dog. While the entertainer in him will be somewhat disappointed at not having a 'live' audience, that is unlikely to play on his mind when he takes guard.

Semi-veteran

Padikkal is already a semi-veteran even though he has so much time on his side. He debuted for his State in First Class cricket when only 18, more than seven years back. It was a debut to remember; dismissed for seven in the first innings, he shepherded a successful if tricky chase of 184 with a flowing 77 in the second against Maharashtra in Mysuru in December 2018. Even at that nascent stage, it was obvious that he was a cut above most. One of the things experts look for in batters is the 'time' they have at their disposal; in a game of milli-seconds, Padikkal seemed to have at least a couple of extra seconds - if that makes any sense - on others, quickly sizing up length, seeing the ball early and playing it late, all hallmarks of a champion in the making.

If Padikkal doesn't have more than four international caps, two each in the Test and 20-over formats, put that down to the depth in Indian cricket and the manic competition for places. On his unexpected Test debut against England in Dharamsala - he only played because his future captain at Royal Challengers Bengaluru, Rajat Patidar, injured his left ankle at practice a day before the game - in March 2024, Padikkal uncorked a fairly beautiful 65 on a surface with decent pace and good bounce, qualities that he feasts on.

Walking in at No. 4 with an imposing platform already set by Yashasvi Jaiswal and skipper Rohit Sharma - India were 275 for two in response to England's 218 - Padikkal dominated the second half of the innings. Of the 128 runs scored when he was in the middle, he accounted for 65 subliminally attractive runs. Standing tall and making full use of his height, he played numerous attractive strokes off the backfoot through point and the covers, eliciting admiring, maybe even semi-envious, oohs and aahs from hardened English writers who were at the end of their tether with their side on the cusp of a shattering 1-4 series loss. They lapsed into the comparison game, likening Padikkal's backfoot play on the offside to Mooen Ali's. Not many among the large contingent of Indian journalists were necessarily in agreement, though no one who witnessed that superb knock was in any doubt about the Padikkal quality.

Inauspicious start

In the next 22 months, Padikkal figured in just one more Test, against Australia in Perth in November that year when Shubman Gill was out with a fractured left thumb. He made an inauspicious start to his overseas career when he was caught behind after 23 scoreless deliveries, dismissed for a blob by Josh Hazlewood. He made a neat 25 in the second innings and then warmed the bench in that series, as he has done subsequently too, as Gill recovered in time for the next game in Adelaide.

Both of Padikkal's Test appearances have come about because of injuries to guaranteed starters; it's perhaps mere coincidence that India have won both those games but given how much they have struggled at home in recent times, it may not be the best idea to fit Padikkal in because, after all, India don't lose Tests when Padikkal plays, right? Seriously though, if the team management stops investing in semi-all-rounders to extend the batting and places its eggs in the specialist basket, or takes cognisance of Sai Sudharsan's travails, Padikkal could well slot in as the next No. 3 against Afghanistan in June and in Sri Lanka in August.

It's not his Hazare stats alone that will precipitate his return to the five-day game, because Padikkal hasn't disappointed whenever he has played against the red ball either this season. In his only Duleep Trophy appearance for South Zone against Central Zone in September, he made a half-century and his lone Ranji fixture in the first half of the league phase netted him 115 runs, including a fluid 96. While he missed the five-Test tour of England in the summer through injury, he looked completely at ease in the nets against Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj and the spin pack during the home showdowns against West Indies and South Africa in October and November respectively. By steadfastly opting to overlook his touch, form and class, the Indian leadership group provided an unenviable example of how not to make a good thing count.

Even at the nascent stage, it was obvious that Padikkal was a cut above most. One of the things experts look for in batters is the 'time' they have at their disposal

India are fortunate that they have a plethora of young batters who are proficient in all three formats. Test and ODI skipper Gill headlines that list alongside Jaiswal, who is another unfortunate sufferer of whimsical selection. Add Padikkal to that group. Just when he appeared primed to kick on after making 400-plus runs in his first two IPL seasons (2020 and 2021) for Royal Challengers Bengaluru, he was laid low by an acute intestinal issue that set him back considerably for the better part of two seasons. That's why his first-class average of 41.01 from 49 games is misleading because once he returned from illness in the 2023-24 season, he dialled in wonderfully, making the most runs for his state in the Hazare Trophy and backing it up with four hundreds in six first-class outings.

He averages a phenomenal 82.15 in 40 List A matches (50-over cricket), and has buttressed an average of 32.32 with a strike-rate of 135.83 in 115 20-over fixtures. In IPL 2025 on his return to RCB after two seasons with Rajasthan Royals and a third with Lucknow Super Giants, Padikkal rediscovered his mojo, playing several crucial hands - a strike-rate of 150.61 more than compensated for a not-inconsiderable average of 27.44 in 10 matches. But with the business end of the tournament approaching, Padikkal sustained a hamstring injury that ended his interest. He wasn't around to play his part in his franchise's maiden IPL title triumph at the 18th attempt, but he had already left his mark by then.

It was this hamstring injury that prevented him from boarding the flight to England in June but once he proved his fitness and backed it up with runs, he was back in the Indian Test set-up. Even though he didn't get game-time, he is clearly better off for his skirmishes in the nets with the country's best bowlers, and that confidence has manifested itself in a nightmare for bowlers at the Hazare Trophy.

Long levers

Padikkal has what the pundits now call long levers - apparently, it is unfashionable these days to just say 'long reach' - which, coupled with his equally long stride, allow him to strike the crisply off the front foot. Few batters bring the wrists more into play while driving through the offside than the rangy, attractive left-hander who was born in Edapal in Kerala but for whom Bengaluru has always been home. He has now developed into an all-round attacking package, equally felicitous off front foot and back, on the offside and on, against pace and spin alike. He is at that stage of his cricketing journey where he has enough experience - and setbacks - to fall back on and learn from. But because he is there and thereabouts, in the mix but not yet a preferred choice, there is a raging internal fire which he has learnt to channel admirably and effectively.

The next four or so months, starting Monday, will be massive for Padikkal. First, there is the Hazare Trophy which Karnataka are attempting to defend. Having spoiled his teammates with his rich vein of form, Padikkal will be expected to spearhead his side's challenge in the company of his captain and fellow opener Mayank Agarwal and lay the foundation on which a formidable middle-order can build. Then come the two remaining league fixtures in the Ranji Trophy; Karnataka are currently perched atop Group B, ahead of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, and will be desperate to make it to the knockouts so that they can sustain their quest for a first Ranji title since the 2014-15 season. The final stop in the domestic calendar is IPL 2026; RCB are in uncharted territory, trying to retain the crown worn last year, and Padikkal will fancy himself to come good yet again.

All three formats lie in wait then. India will embark on a journey of rebuilding after the T20 World Cup ending in March. If Padikkal has a terrific IPL to go with his other exploits, who is to say that, finally, he won't get his due and worm his way into the affections of the decision-making group?

THE GIST

- It's not Padikkal's Hazare Trophy stats alone that will precipitate his return to the five-day game because he hasn't disappointed whenever he has played against the red ball either this season
- If he doesn't have more than four international caps, two each in the Test and 20-over formats, put that down to the depth in Indian cricket and the manic competition for places
- The next four or so months, starting Monday, will be massive for Padikkal. First, there is the Hazare Trophy which Karnataka are attempting to defend

Incredible run: Runs have flowed from Padikkal's bat this season, and he isn't finished yet. VIJAY SONEJI

SPORTSTAR

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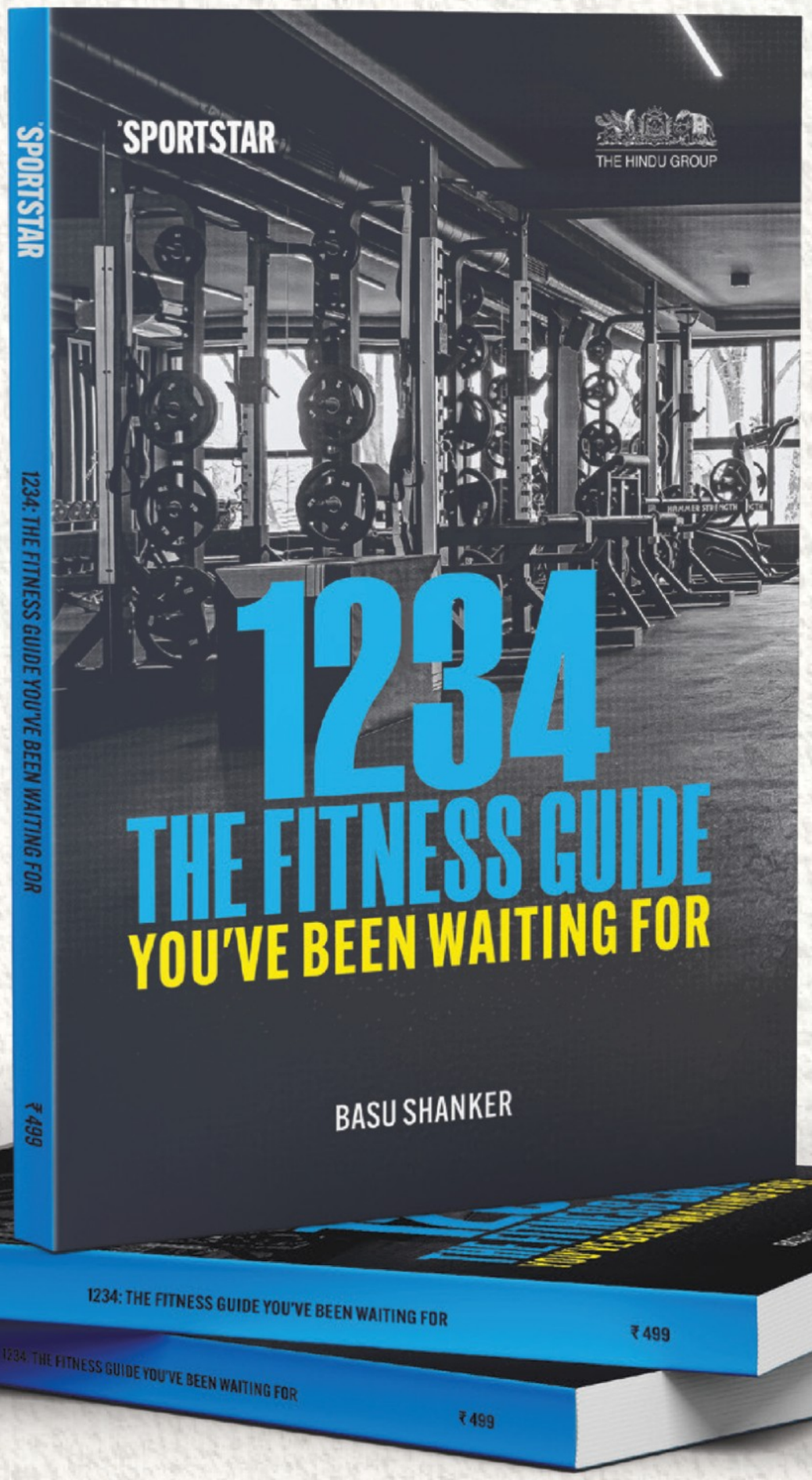

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India's oldest Open Circuit Wind Tunnel at IISc gets an upgrade

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The upgraded Open Circuit Wind Tunnel (OCWT) at the Department of Aerospace Engineering, IISc will be inaugurated on January 12.

OCWT is the oldest facility in India initiated in the 1950s under the guidance of Prof. O.G. Tietjens, and completed in 1959 under the chairmanship of Prof. Satish Dhawan. Inaugurated by Jaya Chamaraja Wadiyar, the then Maharaja of Mysore, the OCWT remains the largest wind tunnel facility in the country.

Over the decades, it has been instrumental in supporting several national aerospace development programmes as well as non-aerospace studies.

According to the department, in 2025, the facility underwent a major upgrade with support from TVS and IISc that involved replacing the legacy fan-motor drive system with a modern state-of-the-art system. This has increased the maximum test-section velocity from 45m/s to 70m/s with more precise speed control and enhanced levels of automation.

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED

(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)

TENDER NOTIFICATION (KPPP mode only)

KPTCL invites bids through e-procurement for the following works:

No.: CEE/T(Op)Z/HSN/SEE(O)/AEE-4/K-8T4 & 8T3/2025-26/12270-73 & 12274-77 Dt: 08.01.2026

(1) Indent No.: KPTCL/2025-26/IND0254/Call-2 for manufacture, testing and supply of different sizes of 1.1 kV, Class HR (Heat Resistant) PVC Insulated, Copper Control cables for maintenance works for various substations coming under the jurisdiction of Transmission (Operation) Zone, Hassan conforming to KPTCL technical specification, F.O.R.D at store/site basis, including insurance, transportation and unloading.

(2) Indent No.: KPTCL/2025-26/IND0242/Call-2 for Design, manufacture, testing and supply of 5 no's of Battery charger to Transmission Operation Zone KPTCL Hassan :- 2 x 220 V, 300 AH (with 2 nos. of float and 2 nos. of float cum boost including control panels, change over arrangement etc., complete as per technical specification along with 2 separate DC Distribution Panels (Indoor) 1 I/C+20 O/G SFU 60A+20 O/G SFU 30A. Battery Charger conforming to KPTCL technical specification, F.O.R.D at store/site basis, including insurance, transportation and unloading.

No.: CEE/T(Op)Z/HSN/SEE(O)/AEE-5/F-72 & 73/2025-26/12301-04 & 12297-300 Dt: 09.01.2026

(3) Tender No.: KPTCL/2025-26/SS/WORK_INDENT3048/CALL-2 Combined package for **(a)** Replacement of damaged/age old Drake/Coyote ACSR conductor of 11 kV Bus by good Drake/Coyote ACSR conductor and replacement of age old MS L-Channel of 11 kV Bus by GI 1B1& 1B2 channels & replacement of faulty LA by new 9kV 10 kA LA at **66/11 kV Rampura S/s,** ChannarayapatnaTaluk, Operations Division, Holenarasipura. **(b) 66/11 kV Channarayaptana S/s:** Providing additional 3 runs and 1 run of 11 kV UG cable for 11 kV Bank 1& 2 respectively at **66/11 kV Channarayapatna S/s,** Operations Division, Holenarasipura **on Partial Turnkey Basis. Reserved for SC category.(CALL-2)**

(4) Tender No.: KPTCL/2025-26/SS/WORK_INDENT3058/CALL-2 Combined package of Seven(07) works for "Providing new 11kV PCVCB's/MCVCB's for bifurcation of partial load of overloaded 11kV feeders at 66/11kV sub-stations Doddabemmatti, Hirisave, Rampura, Juttanahally, Attichowdenahally,Hangarahally and M.Dasapura in Channarayapatna, Holenarasipura and Arakalagudu Taluk, Hassan District Karnataka State on **PartaialTurnkey Basis**".

No.: CEE/T(Op)Z/HSN/SEE(O)/AE-1/2025-26/12309-12 Dt: 09.01.2026

(5) Tender No.: KPTCL/2025-26/SS/WORK_INDENT3191 for Providing additional 1x10MVA, 110/11kV Power Transformer at existing 110/11kV Mavali sub station in Soraba Taluk, Shivamogga District **on PTK Basis. (Call-2)**

Note: 10MVA PTR and 11kV switchgear will be supplied by KPTCL for above work.

The detailed notification regarding subject enquiry in the e-tendering process can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website **https://kptcl.karanataka.gov.in** with hyperlink **"E Procurement KPTCL"** or **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **13.01.2026 at 11.00 Hrs for Sl.No. (1), (2) & (5) and** on or after **12.01.2026 at 11.00 Hrs for Sl.No. (3) & (4).** Other details can be had from the office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Chief Engineer, Electy., Transmission(Operations) Zone, KPTCL, 3rd Floor, Prasarana Bhavana, Santhepete, B.M. Road, Hassan-573 201.

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, ANGAMUTHU MAGESWARI MOGANAPRIYA D/o S. Angamuthu No. 30, IPS Nagar, Vazhudareddy, Villupuram, Tamilnadu–605401. Has Changed my name to A M MOGANAPRIYA. Vide affidavit dated 07.01.2026

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE UNDER ORDER 21 RULE 64, 66 OF CPC IN THE COURT OF THE 9TH ADDITIONAL DISTRICT JUDGE KRISHNA AT MACHILIPATNAM
E.P.No.13/2023 in O.S.No. 33/2010
Between:
1) **Chilamkurthy Sanjeeva Reddy (Died)**
2) **Chilamkurthy Anjana Devi & Others ...D.Hrs**
AND
1) **Gutta KoteswaraRao (Died)**
2) **Gutta Lakshmi Kumari & Others ...J.Drs**
To:
J.Dr.3) Nadella Padmaja D/o. (Late) Gutta Koteswara Rao C/o. Venkataratnam Chowdary Nadella, FlatNo. C-101 Ramky Utsav Apartment, Bangalore North RMV Extension - II Stage NewBell Road, Near MS Ramaiah Hospital, Bangalore East-560064 Karnataka State, Ph.8105312467.
J.Dr.4) Nallapuneni Sirisha W/o.Madhu Pitchaiah R/o.Door No.10-3-68/7 Mamillagudem, Khammam Urban Khammam, Telangana State-507001.
J.Dr.5) Gutta Ramadevi W/o.Tatineni Santa Kumar R/o.A-608, IVYBotanica IVY Estate, Behind Lexicon School Pune, Maharastra State-412207.
Please Take Sale Notice That the above E.P. is filed Against all of you For Recovery of Rs.59,95,797/- with intrest of 6% p.a. of Rs. 30,00,000/- and For Costs and its matter is posted to 29.01.2026 For Notice under order 21 Rule 64, 66 of CPC for your appearence personally or through Advocate in the above Court at 10.30 a.m. If you failed to attend the court on that day the matter will be held and decided in your absence.
J.M.PRASAD (J.P.)
Advocate for D.Hrs
Machilipatnam, Krishna Dist., A.P.
Cell: 98480 89851

ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ ಪಟ್ಟಣ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರ, ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ

ನಂ.ಮುಇಂ/ಪುಅ/ಬಾ.ಪ.ಅ.ಪ್ರಾ/ಹರಾಜುಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ/2025–26/2214 ದಿನಾಂಕ:09/01/2026

ವಸತಿ ಮೂಲೆ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳ ಬಹಿರಂಗ ಹರಾಜು ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ ನವನಗರದ ವಿವಿಧ ಸೆಕ್ಟರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವಸತಿ ಮೂಲೆ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳನ್ನು ಬಹಿರಂಗ ಹರಾಜು ಮೂಲಕ ವಿತರಣೆ ಮಾಡಲು ಬಿಟಿಡಿಎ (ಮೂಲೆ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳ ಹರಾಜು) ನಿಯಮ 2003ರನ್ವಯ ಹಾಗೂ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರಕಾರದ ಆದೇಶ ಸಂ. ಆರ್.ಡಿ/70/ಆರ್.ಇ.ಎಚ್/2003 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 03.09.2004 ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಇವರ ಆದೇಶದಂತೆ ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ ಪಟ್ಟಣ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರದ 163 ನೇಯ ಬೋರ್ಡ ಸಭೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಯುನಿಟ್–1 ಮತ್ತು 2 ರಲ್ಲಿಯ ಮೂಲೆ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳನ್ನು ಬಹಿರಂಗ ಹರಾಜು ಮಾಡುವ ಮೂಲಕ ವಿಲೇವಾರಿ ಮಾಡಲು ತೀರ್ಮಾನಿಸಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಸರಕಾರದ ಅಪರ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿಗಳು ಜಲ ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ ಇಲಾಖೆ ವಿಕಾಸ ಸೌಧ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಇವರ ಪತ್ರ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ–ಇ–ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಜಸಂಇ–104 ಕೆಬಿಎನ್ 2025 ದಿನಾಂಕ 08–05–2025 ಮತ್ತು ಮಾನ್ಯ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥಾಪಕ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ಭಾಗ್ಯ ಜಲ ನಿಗಮ ನಿಯಮಿತ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಇವರ ಪತ್ರ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ–ವ್ಯನಿ/ಕೃಭಾಜನಿನಿ/ತಾಂ.ಸ–5/09/2024–25/672 ದಿನಾಂಕ 28–05–2025 ರಂದು ಅನುಮೋದನೆ ನೀಡಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಈ ಕೆಳಕಾಣಿಸಿದ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳನ್ನು ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ ಪಟ್ಟಣ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರದ ಆವರಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನ ದಿನಾಂಕಗಳಂದು ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 10:30 ಘಂಟೆಗೆ ಬಹಿರಂಗ ಹರಾಜು ಮಾಡಲು ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕರಲ್ಲಿ ತಿಳಿಯಪಡಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಬಹಿರಂಗ ಹರಾಜಿಗಾಗಿ ಆಯ್ಕೆ ಮಾಡಲಾದ ವಸತಿ ಮೂಲೆ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳು ಸ್ಥಳದಲ್ಲಿ ಇದ್ದ ಅಳತೆಗೆ ಒಳಪಟ್ಟು ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಮಾದರಿಗಳ ದರಗಳ ವಿವರ ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನಂತಿದೆ. ಭಾಗವಹಿಸುವ ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರು ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನ ಕನಿಷ್ಟ ಮೌಲ್ಯದ ಮೇಲೆ ಬಿಡ್‌ನ್ನು ಪ್ರಾರಂಭಿಸಬೇಕು.

ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳನ್ನು ದಿನಾಂಕ: 16/02/2026 ರಿಂದ 13/03/2026 ರ ವರೆಗೆ ರಜಾ ದಿನಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊರತುಪಡಿಸಿ ಬಹಿರಂಗ ಹರಾಜು ಮಾಡಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಹರಾಜಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಲು ಇಚ್ಛಿಸುವವರು ದಿನಾಂಕ: 22/01/2026 ರಿಂದ 12/02/2026 ರ ಸಾಯಂಕಾಲ 5.30 ರ ಘಂಟೆಯ ಒಳಗಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿ ಟೋಕನ್ ಪಡೆಯಲು ತಿಳಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಈ ಕೆಳಕಾಣಿಸಿದ ಬಹಿರಂಗ ಹರಾಜು ಮಾಡಲು ಪ್ರಸ್ತಾಪಿಸಲಾದ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳಿಗೆ ಯಾರಾದರೂ ಆಕ್ಷೇಪಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವದ್ದಿದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಕಛೇರಿಗೆ ದಿ: 19/01/2026 ರೊಳಗಾಗಿ ಖುದ್ದಾಗಿ ಸೂಕ್ತ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ಈ ಕಛೇರಿಗೆ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಲು ತಿಳಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ದಿನ–01 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 16–02–2026 ರಂದು ಸೋಮವಾರ

SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
1	20	A	162	8	9	72	775	1335	1034625
2	30	A	38	8	9	72	775	1335	1034625
3	30	A	56	8	9	72	775	1335	1034625
4	64	A	57	11.25	9	101.25	1090	1335	1455150
5	34	A	340	8	9	72	775	1335	1034625
6	68	B	1	12	11.7	140.4	1511	1335	2017185
7	68	B	9	12	12	144	1550	1335	2017185
8	68	B	10	12	12	144	1550	1335	2017185
9	68	B	18	12	12	144	1550	1335	2017185
10	68	B	19	12	12	144	1550	1335	2017185

ದಿನ–02 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 17–02–2026 ರಂದು ಮಂಗಳವಾರ

SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
11	69	C	9	12	18	216	2325	1335	3103875
12	69	C	10	12	18	216	2325	1335	3103875
13	67	C	138	18	12	216	2809	1335	3750015
14	69	C	32	14.5	18	261	2809	1335	3750015
15	69	C	41	12	18	216	2325	1335	3103875
16	69	D	1	19	24	456	4908	1335	6552180
17	69	D	11	19	24	456	4908	1335	6552180
18	69	E	6	18	27	486	5231	1335	6983385
19	69	E	7	18	27	486	5231	1335	6983385
20	69	C	42	12	18	216	2325	1335	3103875

ದಿನ–03 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 18–02–2026 ರಂದು ಬುಧವಾರ

SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
21	64	A	68	11.25	9	101.25	1090	1335	1455150
22	40	A	72	8	8.9	71.2	766	1335	1022610
23	64	A	69	8.5	9	76.5	823	1335	1098705
24	40	A	169	8.2	9.05	74.21	799	1335	1066665
25	65	A	1	8.75	9	78.75	848	1335	1132080
26	68	B	27	12	12	144	1550	1335	2069250
27	68	B	28	12	11.8	141.6	1524	1335	2034540
28	68	B	36	12	11.8	141.6	1524	1335	2034540
29	68	B	37	13	12	156	1679	1335	2241465
30	68	B	49	13	11.8	153.4	1651	1335	2204085

ದಿನ–04 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 19–02–2026 ರಂದು ಗುರುವಾರ

SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
31	69	C	51	14.5	18	261	2809	1335	3750015
32	69	C	64	14.5	18	261	2809	1335	3750015
33	68	C	9	12	18	216	2325	1335	3103875
34	68	C	10	12	18	216	2325	1335	3103875
35	68	C	27	12	18	216	2325	1335	3103875
36	68	C	28	12	18	216	2325	1335	3103875
37	69	D	12	19	24	456	4908	1335	6552180
38	69	D	22	19	24	456	4908	1335	6552180
39	69	E	18	18	27	486	5231	1335	6983385
40	69	E	19	18	27	486	5231	1335	6983385

ದಿನ–05 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 20–02–2026 ರಂದು ಶುಕ್ರವಾರ

SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
41	65	A	6	8.75	9	78.75	848	1335	1132080
42	65	A	7	8.75	9	78.75	848	1335	1132080
43	65	A	12	8.75	9	78.75	848	1335	1132080
44	65	A	13	8.75	9	78.75	848	1335	1132080
45	65	A	18	8.75	9	78.75	848	1335	1132080
46	68	B	50	13	11.8	153.4	1651	1335	2204085
47	67	B	1	11.5	12	138	1485	1335	1982475
48	67	B	10	11.5	12	138	1485	1335	1982475
49	67	B	11	11.5	12	138	1485	1335	1982475
50	67	B	20	11.5	12	138	1485	1335	1982475

ದಿನ–06 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 21–02–2026 ರಂದು ಶನಿವಾರ

SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
51	68	C	37	13.5	18	243	2616	1335	3492360
52	68	C	43	13.5	18	243	2616	1335	3492360
53	68	C	44	13.5	18	243	2616	1335	3492360
54	68	C	50	13.5	18	243	2616	1335	3492360
55	68	C	51	13.5	18	243	2616	1335	3492360
56	68	C	57	13.5	18	243	2616	1335	3492360
57	67	D	1	24	19	439.75	4733	1335	6318555
58	67	D	8	24	19	439.75	4733	1335	6318555
59	67	E	1	20.5	27	553.5	5958	1335	7953930
60	67	E	5	20.5	27	553.5	5958	1335	7953930

ದಿನ–07 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 23–02–2026 ರಂದು ಸೋಮವಾರ

SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
61	65	A	19	8.75	9	78.75	848	1335	1132080
62	65	A	24	8.75	9	78.75	848	1335	1132080
63	65	A	25	8.75	9	78.75	848	1335	1132080
64	65	A	30	8.75	9	78.75	848	1335	1132080
65	65	A	31	8.75	9	78.75	848	1335	1132080
66	67	B	21	12	14.2	170.4	1834	1335	2448390
67	67	B	33	12	15	180	1938	1335	2587230
68	67	B	34	12	15	180	1938	1335	2587230
69	67	B	46	12	15	180	1938	1335	2587230
70	66	B	1	12	12	144	1550	1335	2069250

ದಿನ–08 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 24–02–2026 ರಂದು ಮಂಗಳವಾರ

SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
71	68	C	58	13.5	18	243	2616	1335	3492360
72	68	C	64	13.5	18	243	2616	1335	3492360
73	68	C	73	12	18	216	2325	1335	3103875
74	68	C	74	12	18	216	2325	1335	3103875
75	68	C	91	12	18	216	2325	1335	3103875
76	68	C	92	12	18	216	2325	1335	3103875
77	67	D	9	24	19.5	450.12	4845	1335	6468075
78	65	D	1	19	24	456	4908	1335	6552180
79	67	E	6	27	19.5	526.5	5667	1335	7565445
80	67	E	12	27	19.5	526.5	5667	1335	7565445

ದಿನ–09 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 25–02–2026 ರಂದು ಬುಧವಾರ

SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
81	65	A	36	8.75	9	78.75	848	1335	1132080
82	65	A	37	8.75	9	78.75	848	1335	1132080
83	65	A	42	8.75	9	78.75	848	1335	1132080
84	65	A	43	8.75	9	78.75	848	1335	1132080
85	65	A	48	8.75	9	78.75	848	1335	1132080
86	66	B	9	12	12	144	1550	1335	2069250
87	66	B	10	12	12	144	1550	1335	2069250
88	66	B	18	12	12	144	1550	1335	2069250
89	66	B	19	12	12	144	1550	1335	2069250
90	66	B	27	12	12	144	1550	1335	2069250

ದಿನ–10 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 26–02–2026 ರಂದು ಗುರುವಾರ

SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
91	67	C	1	18	16.5	297	3197	1335	4267995
92	67	C	10	18	16.5	297	3197	1335	4267995
93	67	C	11	11.5	18	207	2228	1335	2974380
94	67	C	18	11.5	18	207	2228	1335	2974380
95	67	C	19	11.5	18	207	2228	1335	2974380
96	67	C	26	11.5	18	207	2228	1335	2974380
97	65	D	11	19	24	456	4908	1335	6552180
98	65	D	12	19	24	456	4908	1335	6552180
99	67	E	13	27	19.5	526.5	5667	1335	7565445
100	67	E	19	20.5	27	553.5	5958	1335	7953930

ದಿನ–11 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 27–02–2026 ರಂದು ಶುಕ್ರವಾರ

SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
101	64	A	85	8	9	76.5	823	1335	1098705
102	48	A	48	8	9	72	775	1335	1034625
103	49	A	206	8	9	72	775	1335	1034625
104	49	A	214	8	9	72	775	1335	1034625
105	49	A	248	8	9	72	775	1335	1034625
106	66	B	28	12	12	144	1550	1335	2069250
107	66	B	36	12	12	144	1550	1335	2069250
108	66	B	37	13	12	156	1679	1335	2241465
109	66	B	49	13	12	156	1679	1335	2241465
110	66	B	50	13	12	156	1679	1335	2241465

ದಿನ–12 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 06–03–2026 ರಂದು ಶುಕ್ರವಾರ

SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
111	67	C	27	18	12	216	2325	1335	3103875
112	67	C	32	18	24	432	4650	1335	6207750
113	67	C	33	18	24	432	4650	1335	6207750
114	67	C	38	18	12	216	2325	1335	3103875
115	67	C	39	14.5	18	261	2809	1335	3750015
116	67	C	53	14.5	18	261	2809	1335	3750015
117	65	D	22	19	24	456	4908	1335	6552180
118	67	E	23	20.5	27	553.5	5958	1335	7953930
119	67	C	139	18	16.5	297	3197	1335	4267995
120	65	E	6	17	27	459	4941	1335	6596235

ದಿನ–13 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 07–03–2026 ರಂದು ಶನಿವಾರ

SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
121	49	A	285	8	8.7	69.6	749	1335	999915
122	49	A	308	8	9	72	775	1335	1034625
123	49	A	327	8	9	72	775	1335	1034625
124	49	A	328	8	9	72	775	1335	1034625
125	49	A	344	8	9	72	775	1335	1034625
126	66	B	62	13	12	156	1679	1335	2241465
127	66	B	63	13	12	156	1679	1335	2241465
128	66	B	69	13	12	156	1679	1335	2241465
129	66	B	70	13	12	156	1679	1335	2241465
130	66	B	76	13	12	156	1679	1335	2241465

ದಿನ–14 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 09–03–2026 ರಂದು ಸೋಮವಾರ

SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
131	67	C	54	14.5	18	261	2809	1335	3750015
132	67	C	68	14.5	18	261	2809	1335	3750015
133	67	C	69	14.5	18	261	2809	1335	3750015
134	67	C	83	14.5	18	261	2809	1335	3750015
135	67	C	84	14.5	18	261	2809	1335	3750015
136	67	C	98	14.5	18	261	2809	1335	3750015
137	67	C	99	18	12	216	2325	1335	3103875
138	65	E	7	18	27	486	5231	1335	6983385
139	65	E	18	18	27	486	5231	1335	6983385
140	65	E	19	18	27	486	5231	1335	6983385

Conservation practices in the Global South undermine rights: researchers

In an article in *Nature*, a group of researchers, including many from India, has argued for greater rights, agency, and education among communities; as the late conservationist Madhav Gadgil put it, 'Talk of many things, not just air and water and the bird that sings, but of men and money and economic reforms...'

Divya Gandhi

Exactly 20 years ago, forest rangers in Chitwan National Park in Nepal nabbed a farmer, Shikharam Chaudhary, who they believed helped his son bury, in his own backyard, a stolen rhino horn. The rangers interrogated him and waterboarded him in prison.

Days later, Chaudhary died. No horn was found. But the large and wealthy global conservation organisation World Wildlife Fund (WWF) curiously campaigned for the charges filed against the rangers to be dropped, and won. The story came to light in an investigation by *BuzzFeed News* in 2019.

But two decades after this murder, the colonial legacy in the world of conservation, of privileging individual wildlife over human well-being, endures in the Global South. One article in the latest edition of *Nature* suggests the marginalisation and "othering" - the treatment of people as "different", or creating an "us" versus "them" narrative - continues to affect indigenous people when conservation projects are concerned.

The discourse on racism in conservation was renewed by the Black Lives Matter protests of 2020. The authors of the paper, many of whom are Indian scientists, instead propose a framework for more "inclusive" conservation that supports the human rights of black, indigenous and people of colour (BIPOC) communities, and nature, by countering exclusion.

The colonial legacy in the world of conservation, of privileging individual wildlife over human well-being, endures in the Global South. M. SATHYAMOORTHY/THE HINDU

A great othering

The history of conservation has always been steeped in marginalisation, injustice and racism, said the paper: "'Othering' in conservation has primarily occurred against BIPOC communities, and is exacerbated in the global south, where governance systems and the rule of law and protection of both individual and collective rights are often weaker."

The main players in this form of discrimination are the wealthy elite, multi-national corporations, and the inheritance of the colonial penchant for a "pristine" wilderness devoid of people.

Colonial rulers routinely forced indigenous peoples and communities out of protected areas. However, the paper said, although conservation "has evolved substantially to be more inclusive," the racist European colonial past has created a roadmap for continued marginalisation.

The scientists elaborate that the modern conservation movement began during the European colonial era in the 1800s, when indigenous people were portrayed as "uncivilised" and racially inferior. They rationalised the latter's extermination and the appropriation of their territories, especially in India and in African colonies. Today, "conservation campaigns and initiatives, particularly through campaigns aimed at the Western public, often value wild animals over BIPOC people," the paper added.

Games in India

In India, the British colonial administration created public works projects such as perennial irrigation and railways. But they also instituted mechanisms to displace local communities (for forestry, plantations, development and conservation) and created game reserves where the elite could hunt wildlife for sport.

The authors use the recent example of the tiger Avni, killed in 2018, to illustrate urban-rural divisions in conservation. There was intense public outrage. "Notably, little mention was made of the number, names or ages of the children left parentless following Avni's killing of at least 13 rural villagers," the authors added. Mumbai's animal lovers demanded "justice" for the tigress and her cubs, chanting "Avni's kids, nation's kids".

"Along with that, when these animals, elephants, wild pigs, crocodiles, have left forest areas or sanctuaries to raid crops or kill people, either little has been done, or compensation has been limited," the paper's co-author Kartik Shanker, a professor at the Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, told *The Hindu*.

> Barely 200 years ago, the Niligiris were completely managed by indigenous communities who today have almost no voice at all. They are marginalised on virtually every count
>
> **TARSH THEKAEKARA**
> The Shola Trust

Wildlife conservation in India is still dominated by the urban elite, by certain castes, with their privileged and often Western views of what conservation is, he added. This brings with it a combination of outdated notions of "pristine nature" and neoliberal views of monetising conservation, e.g., ecotourism for the rich, as well as animal-rights-centric opposition to traditional forms of use that can benefit local communities.

In a 2014 report in *The Hindu*, this reporter found that between 2001 and 2011, 192 cases were registered against tribal communities living in and around Nagarahole National Park, violating the Forest Rights Act. The tribal people's "offences" were "trespassing forest land" in which they had lived for generations, collecting honey and cultivating ginger in the forest.

Gadgil's paradigm shift

The new work argues for greater rights, agency, and education among communities. As the late peoples' conservationist and scholar Madhav Gadgil put it in his autobiography, "Talk of many things, not just air and water and the bird that sings, but of men and money and economic reforms..."

There have been many movements to make conservation more people-centric in India. Ashish Kothari's *Kalpavriksh*, Madhav Gadgil's work on *People's Biodiversity Registers*, and Keystone's work in the Nilgiris are some examples.

Most of the progress has been at the level of "ideas", another co-author, Tarsh Thekaekara, trustee of The Shola Trust, told *The Hindu*: "The concept of coexistence has become mainstream, even in India. Forest departments everywhere now use the language of coexistence, and there's a broad recognition that the old fortress conservation model is no longer viable."

But the prevailing notion of "a pristine wilderness without human occupation" casts local people "as enemies, rather than custodians of nature." Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs), on the contrary, can be "very effective stewards of nature." "Dehumanisation" is not limited to extreme events but is a "common everyday occurrence," present in many societies even today, the paper continued.

In Nagarhole, there are ongoing protests by the Jenu Kurubas. The Van Gujjars in the Himalayas continue to be dispossessed of their livelihoods and ways of life, Dr. Thekaekara said. "Almost everywhere you look, there are stories of dispossession."

The Nilgiris is a particularly stark example, he added: "Barely 200 years ago, this landscape was completely managed by indigenous communities who today have almost no voice at all. They are marginalised on virtually every count."

The historical legacy of conservation "cannot be easily undone," said the paper. Instead it proposes a four-step framework to address the disparity: engaging and supporting human rights, advocating for and making space for the agency of IPLCs, challenging the accepted norms of how we engage with people from BIPOC communities, and seeking out new educational opportunities for and from BIPOC communities.

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THE GIST

The death by torture of a Nepalese farmer, Shikharam Chaudhary, at the hands of forest guards created no ripples in the usual elite circles. Instead, WWF campaigned for charges to be dropped

'Othering' has primarily been against BIPOC communities. The main players are the wealthy elite, multi-national corporations, and the inheritance of the colonial penchant for a pristine wilderness devoid of people. Today conservation often values wild animals over people

When the tiger Avni was killed in 2018, there was intense public outrage. Little mention was made of Avni's killing of 13 villagers. Animal lovers chanted 'Avni's kids, nation's kids'

BIG SHOT

A view of snow-covered ground near the Eiffel Tower in Paris on January 7. Cold Arctic air covered Europe in frigid conditions and heavy snowfall, triggering power cuts in parts and disrupting road and air travel.. REUTERS

WHAT IS IT?

Context window: AI's short-term memory

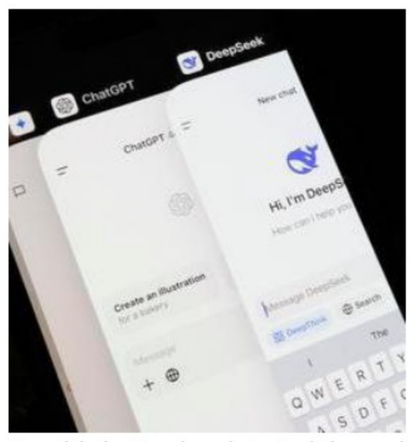
Vasudevan Mukunth

In the context of artificial intelligence (AI), specifically large language models (LLMs) like GPT-5 and Claude, the context window is the maximum amount of text the model can consider at any one time while generating a response. AI models don't read words; instead they read chunks of characters called tokens. Typically 1 token is roughly equivalent to 0.75 words (in English), so 1,000 tokens will represent around 750 words. So when a model has a context window of 8,000 tokens, for example, it means it can handle roughly 6,000 words of data at once. Each context window needs to hold three things simultaneously: the rules telling the AI how to behave; the history of the current chat; and the space required for the AI to generate its next answer.

If the limit is 8,000 tokens and your conversation history is 7,900 tokens long, the AI only has 100 tokens left. If a conversation exceeds the context window, the model might start deleting the oldest parts of the conversation.

The context window is linked to the computational resources available to the model. If you increase the context window length by 2x, the power required increases by roughly 4x. So models with larger windows are much more expensive to run.

Sometimes, even if a model can accept a lakh tokens, it may struggle to find a piece of information buried in the middle. This is called the 'lost in the middle' phenomenon.



AI models don't read words; instead, they read chunks of characters called tokens. SOLEN FEYISSA/UNSPLASH

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ದಿನ–15 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 10–03–2026 ರಂದು ಮಂಗಳವಾರ									
SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
141	64	A	1	11.25	9	101.25	1090	1335	1455150
142	64	A	12	11.25	9	101.25	1090	1335	1455150
143	64	A	13	11.25	9	101.25	1090	1335	1455150
144	64	A	24	11.25	9	101.25	1090	1335	1455150
145	64	A	25	9.5	9	85.5	920	1335	1228200
146	66	B	77	13	12	156	1679	1335	2241465
147	66	B	83	13	12	156	1679	1335	2241465
148	66	B	84	13	12	156	1679	1335	2241465
149	66	B	90	13	12	156	1679	1335	2241465
150	66	B	91	13	12	156	1679	1335	2241465
ದಿನ–16 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 11–03–2026 ರಂದು ಬುಧವಾರ									
SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
151	67	C	104	18	24	432	4650	1335	6207750
152	67	C	105	18	24	432	4650	1335	6207750
153	67	C	110	18	12	216	2325	1335	3103875
154	67	C	111	11.5	18	207	2228	1335	2974380
155	67	C	118	11.5	18	207	2228	1335	2974380
156	67	C	119	11.3	17.5	197.75	2129	1335	2842215
157	67	C	126	11.5	17.5	201.25	2166	1335	2891610
158	67	C	127	18	12	216	2325	1335	3103875
159	67	C	132	18	24	432	4650	1335	6207750
160	67	C	133	18	24	432	4650	1335	6207750
ದಿನ–17 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 12–03–2026 ರಂದು ಗುರುವಾರ									
SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
161	64	A	34	9.5	9	85.5	920	1335	1228200
162	64	A	35	9.5	9	85.5	920	1335	1228200
163	64	A	44	9.5	9	85.5	920	1335	1228200
164	64	A	45	11.25	9	101.25	1090	1335	1455150
165	64	A	56	11.25	9	101.25	1090	1335	1455150
166	66	B	103	13	12	156	1679	1335	2241465
167	66	B	104	13	12	156	1679	1335	2241465
168	66	B	116	13	12	156	1679	1335	2241465
169	66	B	117	12	12	144	1550	1335	2069250
170	66	B	125	12	12	144	1550	1335	2069250
ದಿನ–18 ದಿನಾಂಕ – 13–03–2026 ರಂದು ಶುಕ್ರವಾರ									
SLNO	Sector	Type	PlotNo	Length	Breadth	Area SQM	Area SQFT	RATE	AMOUNT
171	64	A	57	11.25	9	101.25	1090	1335	1455150
172	64	A	68	11.25	9	101.25	1090	1335	1455150
173	64	A	69	8.5	9	76.5	823	1335	1098705
174	64	A	85	8.5	9	76.5	823	1335	1098705
175	64	A	86	8.25	9	74.25	799	1335	1066665
176	66	B	126	12	12	144	1550	1335	2069250
177	66	B	134	12	12	144	1550	1335	2069250
178	66	B	135	12	12	144	1550	1335	2069250
179	66	B	143	12	12	144	1550	1335	2069250
180	66	B	144	12	12	144	1550	1335	2069250

ಬಹಿರಂಗ ಹರಾಜಿನ ನಿಬಂಧನೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಷರತ್ತುಗಳು: 1.ಹರಾಜಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸುವವರು ಭಾರತೀಯ ಪ್ರಜೆಯಾಗಿರಬೇಕು. 2.ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರದಿಂದ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಕ್ರಯ ಪತ್ರ ನೀಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದು ನೊಂದಣಿ ಮಾಡಿಸಿದಾಗ ಇ–ಆಸ್ತಿ ಉತಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾಲಿಕರ ಅಂಕಣದಲ್ಲಿ "ಮುಖ್ಯ ಇಂಜನೀಯರು ಬಾ.ಪ.ಅ.ಪ್ರಾ ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ" ಎಂದು ದಾಖಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ ಮತ್ತು ಅನುಭೋಗದಾರರು ಅಂಕಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಿಡ್ ದಾರರ ಹೆಸರು ನಮೂದಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. 3.ಹತ್ತು ವರ್ಷಗಳ ನಂತರ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರದಿಂದ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಕ್ರಯ ಪತ್ರ/ಷರತ್ತುಬದ್ಧ ಕ್ರಯ ಪತ್ರ/ ಶುದ್ಧ ಕ್ರಯ ಪತ್ರ ಪಡೆದು ಮತ್ತೊಮ್ಮೆ ನೊಂದಣಿ ಮಾಡಿಸಿ ನಿಗದಿತ ಶುಲ್ಕದೊಂದಿಗೆ ನೊಂದಾಯಿಸಿದಾಗ ಮಾಲಿಕರ ಅಂಕಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರ ಹೆಸರು ನಮೂದಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. 4.ಬಿಡ್ ಆದ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳು ಇ–ಆಸ್ತಿ ಉತಾರ ಪಡೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುವಾಗ ತಂತ್ರಾಂಶದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಿಡ್ ಆಸ್ತಿಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಈಗಾಗಲೇ ಹಕ್ಕು ಪತ್ರ ಪಡೆದ ಸಂತ್ರಸ್ಥರು ಇ–ಖಾತೆಗೆ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದು ಅರ್ಜಿಗಳು ಫಿಫೋ (First In First Out) ಮಾದರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಲೇವಾರಿಯಾಗುತ್ತವೆ. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಇ–ಉತಾರ ನೀಡುವುದು ವಿಳಂಬವಾಗಲಿದ್ದು, ಕಾರಣ ಇ–ಖಾತಾ ಸೃಜನೆಯಾದ ನಂತರ ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರಿಗೆ ಹಕ್ಕು ಪತ್ರ, ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಕ್ರಯ ಪತ್ರ ಮತ್ತು ಇ–ಉತಾರ ನೀಡಲಾಗುವುದು. 5.ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರದಿಂದ ಹಕ್ಕು ಪತ್ರ ವಿತರಣೆಯಾದ ದಿನಾಂಕದಿಂದ ಹತ್ತು ವರ್ಷ ಪೂರ್ಣಗೊಂಡ ನಂತರ ಈ ಕಛೇರಿಯಿಂದ ಎನ್.ಒ.ಸಿ ಪಡೆದುಕೊಂಡ ನಂತರ ತಮ್ಮ ಹಕ್ಕನ್ನು ಬೇರೆಯವರಿಗೆ ವರ್ಗಾಯಿಸತಕ್ಕದ್ದು. 6.ಆಸಕ್ತಿಯುಳ್ಳವರು ಹರಾಜಿಗೆ ಸೂಚಿಸಿರುವ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳನ್ನು ಮುಂಚಿತವಾಗಿಯೇ ನೋಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕು. ಸದರಿ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳನ್ನು ಸ್ಥಳದಲ್ಲಿ ಇದ್ದ ಹಾಗೆಯೇ ಹರಾಜು ವಿಲೇವಾರಿ ಮಾಡಲಾಗುವುದು. 7.ಹರಾಜಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸುವರು ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನ ಕೋಷ್ಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ ತೋರಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಮುಂಗಡ ಹಣವನ್ನು ಸಿ.ಎ.ಓ ಬಿಟಿಡಿಎ ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ ಇವರ ಹೆಸರಿನಿಂದ ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಕೃತ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕಿನಿಂದ ಅಥವಾ ಶೆಡ್ಯೂಲ್ಡ ಕಮರ್ಸಿಯಲ್ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕಿನಿಂದ ಡಿ.ಡಿ ಪಡೆದು ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬೇಕು.

ಕ್ರ.ಸಂ	ಮಾದರಿ		ಮುಂಗಡ ಮೊತ್ತ
1	A, B	ವಸತಿ	50,000/–
2	C, D, E	ವಸತಿ	1,00,000/–

ಈ ಮೇಲಿನ ಕೋಷ್ಟಕದಂತೆ 1.00 ಲಕ್ಷ ಡಿ.ಡಿ ಪಡೆದವರು 50,000/– ಡಿ.ಡಿ ಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳ ಹರಾಜಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಲು ಅವಕಾಶವಿರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.
8.ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರವು ನಿಗಧಿಪಡಿಸಿದ ಅರ್ಜಿ ನಮೂನೆಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆದು ಭರ್ತಿ ಮಾಡಿ, ಡಿ.ಡಿ ಯ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ತಮ್ಮ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ವಿಳಾಸ, ಎರಡು ಭಾವ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳು, ಚುನಾವಣಾ ಕಾರ್ಡ, ಆಧಾರ ಕಾರ್ಡ, ಪ್ಯಾನ್ ಕಾರ್ಡ, ಗುರುತಿನ ಚೀಟಿಯನ್ನು ಗೆಜೆಟೆಡ್ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳಿಂದ ದೃಢೀಕರಿಸಿ ಅರ್ಜಿಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ಪ್ಯಾನ್ ಕಾರ್ಡ ಕಡ್ಡಾಯವಾಗಿ ಲಗತ್ತಿಸಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸತಕ್ಕದ್ದು. 9.ರೂ. 100000/– ಗಳ ಡಿ.ಡಿ ಪಾವತಿಸಿದವರು ವಸತಿ " ಸಿ, ಡಿ, ಇ " ಮಾದರಿ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳಿಗೆ ಮಾತ್ರ ಬಿಡ್ ಮಾಡಲು ಅರ್ಹರಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಸದರಿಯವರು ಒಂದು ವೇಳೆ "ಎ,ಬಿ" ಮಾದರಿ ವಸತಿ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳಿಗೆ ಬಿಡ್ ಮಾಡಲು ಬಯಸಿದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕ ರೂ.50000/– ಗಳ ಡಿ.ಡಿ ಪಡೆದು ಪಾವತಿಸತಕ್ಕದ್ದು. ಒಬ್ಬ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಯು ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರದಿಂದ ಒಂದೇ ಯಾವುದಾದರೊಂದು ಮಾದರಿಯ ನಿವೇಶನವನ್ನು ಬಿಡ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಅರ್ಹರಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ. 10.ಹರಾಜಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸುವವರ ಪರವಾಗಿ ಮತ್ತೊಬ್ಬರು ಅಧಿಕಾರ ಪತ್ರ ಪಡೆದು ಹರಾಜಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಬಾಗವಹಿಸಲು ಅವಕಾಶವಿರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಹರಾಜಿನ ದಿನದಂದು ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರು ಸ್ವತಃ ಹಾಜರಿರಬೇಕು. 11.ಯಶಸ್ವಿ ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರು ಬಿಡ್ ಮೊತ್ತದ ಪ್ರತಿಶತ 25% ರಷ್ಟು ಮೊತ್ತವನ್ನು ಹರಾಜಿನ ದಿನವೇ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಪಾವತಿಸತಕ್ಕದ್ದು, ತಪ್ಪಿದಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಂಗಡ ಹಣವನ್ನು ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಮುಟ್ಟುಗೋಲು ಹಾಕಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಿಡ್ ಕೇಳಿದ ನಿವೇಶನವನ್ನು ರದ್ದುಪಡಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು. ಉಳಿದ ನಿವೇಶನದ ಮೊತ್ತವನ್ನು ಫಾರ್ಮ ನಂ.1ರ ಅಧೀಕೃತ ತಿಳುವಳಿಕೆ ಪತ್ರದ ಅನುಸಾರ 45 ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಡಿ. ಡಿ. ಮೂಲಕ ತುಂಬತಕ್ಕದ್ದು. ನಿಗಧಿತ ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ತುಂಬಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗದ ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರು ಅವಧಿ ವಿಸ್ತರಣೆಗೆ ಮನವಿ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರವು ಹಣ ತುಂಬುವ ಅವಧಿಯನ್ನು 90 ದಿನಗಳ ವರೆಗೆ ಮಾತ್ರ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ವಿಸ್ತರಣೆ ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿಯ ಬಾಕಿ ಮೊತ್ತಕ್ಕೆ ಪ್ರತಿಶತ 18% ರಷ್ಟು ಬಡ್ಡಿಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ನಿಯಮಾನುಸಾರ 500/– ರೂ. ಗಳ ದಂಡದ ಹಣದೊಂದಿಗೆ ತುಂಬತಕ್ಕದ್ದು. 12.ಅತೀ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಹರಾಜು ಬೇಡಿ ನಿಗಧಿತ ಕಾಲಾವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪೂರ್ಣ ಹಣ ತುಂಬದೇ ಇರುವ ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರ, ಬಾಗಶಃ ತುಂಬಿದ ಹಣವನ್ನು ಸರಕಾರದ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ ಹರಾಜು ಷರತ್ತು ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 7(6) ಮತ್ತು 7(7)ರನ್ವಯ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಮುಟ್ಟುಗೋಲು ಹಾಕಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವದಷ್ಟೆ ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಅವರ ಜವಾಬ್ದಾರಿಯ ಮೇಲೆ ಸದರ ನಿವೇಶನವನ್ನು ಮರು ಹರಾಜು ಮಾಡಲಾಗುವುದು. 13.ಪ್ರಕಟಿತ ಯಾವುದೇ ಮೂಲೆ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳನ್ನು ಯಾವುದೇ ಹಂತದಲ್ಲಿ ಹರಾಜಿನಿಂದ ಕೈಬಿಡುವ ಹಾಗೂ ಹರಾಜನ್ನು ಒಪ್ಪುವ ಅಥವಾ ರದ್ದುಪಡಿಸುವ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಅಧಿಕಾರವು ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ. 14.ನಿವೇಶನ ಅಳತೆ ವಿವರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವ್ಯತ್ಯಾಸಗಳೇನಾದರೂ ಕಂಡು ಬಂದಲ್ಲಿ ಆ ನಿವೇಶನದ ಸ್ಥಾನಿಕ ನಿಖರ ಅಳತೆ ಮತ್ತು ವಿಸ್ತೀರ್ಣಕ್ಕೆ ಒಳಪಟ್ಟಿರುತ್ತದೆ. 15.ಹರಾಜು ಮಾಡಿದ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳನ್ನು ಪಡೆದ ನಂತರ ಅವುಗಳನ್ನು ಭಾಗ/ ವಿಭಾಗ/ (split) ಮಾಡಲು ಅವಕಾಶವಿರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.16.ಹರಾಜು ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ ಪಟ್ಟಣ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರದ (ಮೂಲೆ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳ ಹರಾಜು) ನಿಯಮ 2003ರ/ ಇಂಪ್ರೂಮೆಂಟ್ ಬೋರ್ಡ ಆ್ಯಕ್ಟ್ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಜರುಗಿಸಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. 17.ಆಯಾ ನಿವೇಶನಗಳಿಗೆ ನಿಗಧಿಪಡಿಸಿದ ಮೌಲ್ಯಕ್ಕಿಂತ ಪ್ರತಿ ಸಲ ಕನಿಷ್ಟ ರೂ. 5000ಕ್ಕಿಂತ ಮೇಲ್ಪಟ್ಟು ಮೊತ್ತಕ್ಕೆ ಬಿಡ್ ಮಾಡುವುದು. 18.ಬಿಡ್ ಮೊತ್ತ ನಿವೇಶನದ ರೂ. 50 ಲಕ್ಷ ಹಾಗೂ 50 ಲಕ್ಷ ಮೇಲ್ಪಟ್ಟು ಆದಲ್ಲಿ ಶೇ 1%ರಷ್ಟು ಆದಾಯ ತೆರಿಗೆ ಮೊತ್ತವು ಒಟ್ಟು ನಿವೇಶನದ ಮೌಲ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಸೇರಿದ್ದು, ತೆರಿಗೆಯನ್ನು ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕವಾಗಿ ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರು ಆದಾಯ ತೆರಿಗೆ ಇಲಾಖೆಗೆ ಭರಿಸಿ ಫಾರ್ಮ ನಂ.16(ಬಿ) ನ್ನು ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವುದು. ಬಿಡ್ ಮೌಲ್ಯದ ಬಾಕಿ ಮೊತ್ತವನ್ನು ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕವಾಗಿ ಭರಿಸಿದ ನಂತರ ಹಕ್ಕು ಪತ್ರ ವಿತರಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು. 19.ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರು ತಮ್ಮ ನಿವೇಶನವನ್ನು ಹರಾಜಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆದ ನಂತರ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯದ ವ್ಯಾಜ್ಯದಿಂದಾಗಿ ನಿವೇಶನವನ್ನು ವಿತರಿಸಲಾಗದಿದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ, ಅಂತಹ ನಿವೇಶನಕ್ಕೆ ಭರಿಸಿದ ಮೊತ್ತವನ್ನು ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರದಿಂದ ಮರಳಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು. ತದನಂತರ ಸದರಿ ಮೊತ್ತಕ್ಕೆ ಯಾವುದೇ ಬಡ್ಡಿಯನ್ನು ನೀಡಲು ಅವಕಾಶವಿರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. 20.ಮೂಲೆ ನಿವೇಶನದ ಹರಾಜಿಗಾಗಿ ಮೇಲೆ ತಿಳಿಸಿದ ನಿಗಧಿಪಡಿಸಿದ ಹರಾಜು ದಿನಾಂಕ/ ಸಮಯವನ್ನು ಮುಂದೂಡುವ/ಹಿಂದೂಡುವ/ಪರಿಷ್ಕರಿಸುವ ಹಕ್ಕನ್ನು ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರವು ಹೊಂದಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಯಾವುದೇ ರೀತಿಯ ವಿವರಣೆ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರದಿಂದ ನೀಡುವ ಅವಶ್ಯವಿರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. 21.ಹರಾಜಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಯಶಸ್ವಿಯಾದ ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರ ಹೆಸರಿನಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಹಕ್ಕು ಪತ್ರ ಮತ್ತು ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಕ್ರಯ ಪತ್ರ ನೀಡಲಾಗುವುದು. ತದನಂತರ ಹೆಸರು ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗೆ ಅವಕಾಶವಿರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. 22.ನಿವೇಶನವನ್ನು ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರ ಹೆಸರಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ ಬಹಿರಂಗ ಹರಾಜು ಮಾಡಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಯಾವುದೇ ಫರ್ಮ/ ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ / ಸಂಘ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ ಹೆಸರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಮತ್ತು ಇನ್ನಿತರರ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ ಹೆಸರಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಲು ಅವಕಾಶ ಇರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. 23.ನಿವೇಶನವನ್ನು ಒಬ್ಬರ ಹೆಸರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ ಬಿಡ್ ಮಾಡಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ, ಜಂಟಿಯಾಗಿ ಬಿಡ್ ಮಾಡಲು ಅವಕಾಶ ಇರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. 24.ಬಿಡ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಲು ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರ ಹೆಸರನಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಎಲ್ಲ ಹಂತದಲ್ಲಿ ಡಿ.ಡಿ ಯನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬೇಕು. ಕಡ್ಡಾಯವಾಗಿ ಡಿ.ಡಿ ಯನ್ನು ಮಾತ್ರ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬೇಕು ಇತರೆ ಯಾವುದೇ ರೀತಿಯ ಹಣ ಸಂದಾಯಕ್ಕೆ ಅವಕಾಶವಿರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. 25.ನಿಗಧಿಪಡಿಸಿದ ಹರಾಜಿನ ದಿನದಂದು ಯಾವುದೇ ಸಾರ್ವತ್ರಿಕ ರಜೆ ಘೋಷಣೆಯಾದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂದಿನ ಹರಾಜು ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯನ್ನು ನಂತರ ಮುಂದಿನ ಕಛೇರಿ ಕೆಲಸದ ದಿನದಂದು ನಡೆಸಲಾಗುವುದು. 26.ಅರ್ಜಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಸರು ನಮೂದಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಹಕ್ಕುಪತ್ರ, ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಕ್ರಯ ಪತ್ರ ಹಾಗೂ ಇ–ಆಸ್ತಿ ಉತಾರದ ಅನುಭೋಗದಾರರ ಅಂಕಣದಲ್ಲಿ ದಾಖಲಿಸಿ ನೀಡಲಾಗುವುದು, ನಂತರ ಯಾವುದೇ ರೀತಿಯ ಹೆಸರು ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗೆ ಅವಕಾಶವಿರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. 27.ಸರಕಾರದಿಂದ / ಚುಣಾವಣೆ ಆಯೋಗದಿಂದ / ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯದಿಂದ ಇನ್ನಿತರೆ ಆದೇಶಗಳಿಗೆ ಮತ್ತು ನಿರ್ದೇಶನಗಳಿಗೆ ಒಳಪಟ್ಟಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/–(ಚಂದ್ರಹಾಸ ಬಂಡಿ)
ಮುಖ್ಯ ಇಂಜನೀಯರು ಹಾಗೂಸದಸ್ಯ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿಗಳು
ಬಾ.ಪ.ಅ.ಪ್ರಾ ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ

DIPR/BGK/RO-NO-/504/KSMCA/2025-26

Neighbour arrested for engineer's murder

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a breakthrough in the case of the death of a 34-year-old software engineer who was found dead at her flat in Ramamurthy Nagar on January 3 in a purported fire accident, police have arrested her neighbour for killing her.

He allegedly broke into her flat when she was alone, tried to force himself on her and when she resisted, he smothered her and later set the flat on fire to make it look like a fire accident.

The accused has been identified as Karnal Kurai, 18, a native of Virajpet town in Kodagu district. He was the neighbour of the deceased and was living with his single mother.

The victim, Sharmila D.K., hailing from Dakshina Kannada district, was residing in a two-bedroom apartment at Sankalpa Nilaya, Subramanya Layout. She was living alone at the apartment at the time of the incident.

Purported fire accident
A fire was reported at Sharmila's apartment on January 3 between 10.15 p.m. and 10.45 p.m. Firefighters rushed to the spot, doused the fire, and found Sharmila's charred body inside the house.

Initially, investigators suspected a short circuit as the cause of the fire, as the blaze appeared to have originated in the bedroom of Sharmila's roommate, who had been in her home town in Assam since November 14, 2025.

Suspicion
However, suspicion arose after one of Sharmila's friends, in his statement to the police, expressed doubts over the circumstances of her death. Based on this, the Ramamurthy Nagar police registered a case and sent the body for post-mortem examination.

"The scene of crime officers and forensic experts found no evidence to support the short-circuit theory. The evidence clearly pointed towards arson. Further, the autopsy revealed that the woman had died due to suffocation," a senior police officer said.

Based on digital evidence, the police zeroed in on the neighbour.

Investigations revealed that Kurai allegedly entered Sharmila's apartment at around 9 p.m. by opening a sliding window. He then approached her and allegedly demanded that she "cooperate sexually".

Sustained injuries
When Sharmila resisted, the accused allegedly held her mouth and nose tightly, causing her to lose consciousness. During the struggle, she sustained bleeding injuries, the police said.

Believing her to be dead, the accused allegedly went into the roommate's vacant bedroom, collected clothes and other inflammatory materials, and set them on fire to destroy evidence. He then fled the scene, taking Sharmila's mobile phone with him. The accused was arrested from his house on January 10. He was produced before a court and remanded in police custody for three days.

He has been booked under Sections 103(1) (punishment for murder), 64(2) (punishment for rape), 66 (punishment for causing death or resulting in persistent vegetative state of victim), and 238 (causing disappearance of evidence of offence or giving false information to screen offender) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023.

Further investigation is under way, the police said.

SWR nears full electrification as Bengaluru Division achieves 99% coverage

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bengaluru Division has achieved more than 99% electrification.

Railway officials said, "The zone is steadily progressing towards achieving 100% electrification in line with the Centre's Viksit Bharat vision and the goal of becoming a Green Railway by the year 2030."

Of the total 3,721.689 route km (RKM) under South Western Railway (SWR), including newly commissioned routes, 3,305 RKM have already been electrified. The officials said electrification works are being fast-tracked across remaining sections to ensure complete coverage at the earliest.

Railway officials say electrification works are being fast-tracked across remaining sections to ensure complete coverage at the earliest. FILE PHOTO

The Bengaluru Division (SBC) is almost fully electrified, with 1,144.049 RKM electrified out of a total 1,144.984 RKM. The Mysuru Division has completed electrification of 1,054.7345 RKM against a total network of 1,141.787 RKM, while the Hubballi Division has electrified 1,106.25 RKM of its 1,434.918 RKM network.

The officials said that the transition from diesel to electric traction has delivered multiple benefits. Electrification has significantly reduced diesel consumption, leading to substantial savings in fuel costs and lowering the Railways' dependence on imported fossil fuels.

Reduction in emissions
It has also contributed to a sharp reduction in carbon emissions, supporting India's climate commitments and improving air quality along railway corridors, the officials said. In addition, the electric traction has improved operational efficiency by enabling faster acceleration, higher hauling capacity, and more reliable train operations.

Lower maintenance
"This has helped enhance punctuality of passenger services and increased throughput for freight trains. Lower maintenance requirements for electric locomotives compared to diesel engines have also reduced operational costs over the long term," the officials added.

Woman held for assaulting Home Guard on duty

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Ramamurthy Nagar Police have arrested a 31-year-old woman for allegedly assaulting a woman Home Guard on traffic duty, following a trivial argument on Friday afternoon.

According to the police, the incident occurred near the K.R. Puram Railway Station on January 9 around 3 p.m. The victim, Lakshmi Narasamma, 36, a Home Guard attached to the Ramamurthy Nagar Traffic Police Station, was deployed to regulate traffic at the busy junction.

The police said the Home Guard was instructing pedestrians and motorists to move to the side of the road to ease congestion when a woman standing in the middle of the road objected. Despite repeated requests, the woman refused to cooperate and allegedly began arguing with the Home Guard.

The situation escalated when the accused reportedly abused the Home Guard and suddenly attacked her.

The woman allegedly pulled the Home Guard's hair, slapped her, and hit her. The Home Guard suffered bleeding injuries to her nose and face. During the scuffle, the accused also allegedly snatched the baton from the Home Guard and continued the assault. Passers-by intervened and rescued the Home Guard, following which the accused fled the spot. The injured Home Guard was later shifted to a government hospital.

The police identified the accused as Mohana, a resident of Narayanapura near Chunchaghatta.

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The record high tourist footfall in Goa last year

1.08 in crore. In 2025, Goa recorded 1,02,84,608 domestic tourists and 5,17,802 foreign tourists, aggregating to 1,08,02,410 total arrivals, the State Tourism Department said. Foreign tourist arrivals through charter flights have played an important role in Goa's tourism. PTI

The number of people killed in the demonstrations in Iran

116 Nationwide protests challenging Iran's theocracy reached the two-week mark, as the death toll in violence surrounding the demonstrations reached at least 116. With the Internet down in Iran, gauging the demonstrations from abroad has grown more difficult. PTI

The number of Kurds detained by govt. forces in Syria

300 Syrian government forces evacuated more than 400 Kurdish fighters from the last district in Aleppo to fall to the army and detained 300 Kurds. The two sides clashed in Aleppo earlier, after negotiations to integrate the Kurds into the new government stalled. AFP

Number of accounts deleted by X over AI obscene content row

600 Microblogging platform X admitted its mistake and removed about 3,500 pieces of content, as well as deleted over 600 accounts, after the IT Ministry raised concerns over obscene content linked to AI chatbot Grok, government sources said. AFP

Number of people arrested over Tripura communal violence

10 The violence happened on Saturday in Saidarpar in the Kumarghat sub-division over the collection of 'chanda' (donation) for a local temple, they said. Superintendent of Police Avinash Kumar Rai said that no fresh violence has been reported. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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Should the age of consent be lowered?

While some argue that the current law criminalises consensual relationships among adolescents, others warn that lowering the age could undermine protections against child exploitation. This debate comes amid rising POCSO cases, highlighting a growing conflict between adolescent autonomy and the need to safeguard vulnerable minors

LETTER & SPIRIT

Kartikey Singh

On January 10, the Supreme Court (SC), in its judgment in the *State of Uttar Pradesh versus Anurudh & Anr.*, acknowledged the growing misuse of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO), 2012 in consensual, romantic adolescent relationships, where one party is a minor. It urged the Union government to initiate corrective measures to exempt genuine adolescent relationships from the special child protection law's rigorous application. This has revived the debate on the 'age of consent'.

The legal framework

The age of consent refers to the legally defined age at which an individual can consent to sexual activity. In India, it is currently 18 years, as established by the gender-neutral POCSO Act. Anyone below this age is classified as a "child", making their consent to sexual acts legally irrelevant. Consequently, sexual acts with minors are treated as "statutory rape", based on the legal presumption that children lack the capacity to give valid consent. Section 19 of the POCSO Act mandates that any person who suspects or has knowledge of an offence under the Act, whether likely to occur or already committed, must report it to the local police or the Special Juvenile Police Unit.

The 18-year threshold was firmly cemented in the broader criminal law framework by the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013. This Act notably amended, among others, Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which defines 'rape' and, until 2012, had set the 'age of consent' at 16 years. The amendments, aimed at strengthening laws related to sexual offences against women, aligned IPC's Section 375 with the 18-year age stipulated in POCSO, thereby ensuring comprehensive protection against child sexual abuse. The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, retained this position: Section 63 defines rape to include sexual acts with or without consent if the woman is under 18.

Historically, India's age of consent has evolved significantly – from 10 years under the 1860 IPC to 12 (Age of Consent Act, 1891), then 14, and subsequently 16 until POCSO raised it to 18 in 2012. Importantly, the age of consent is distinct from the 'minimum age of marriage', which under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, is 18 for females and 21 for males.

Arguments in favour

In recent years, the debate over the age of consent has intensified, particularly due to a surge in POCSO cases involving adolescents aged 16-18, where the girl often testifies to 'consensual sex'. Advocates for lowering the age of consent argue that the current law fails to recognise adolescent sexuality, infringing on the autonomy of 16-18-year-olds capable of giving mature consent. Underscoring the POCSO Act's intent, they emphasise that it was designed to prevent child sexual abuse, not to criminalise consensual romantic relationships among older adolescents.

Reflecting the ground realities of 'adolescent sexual behaviour', the NFHS-4 (2015-16) shows that 11% of girls had their first sexual experience before age 15, and 39% before 18. An Enfold study analysing 7,064 POCSO judgments (2016-2020) across Assam, Maharashtra, and West Bengal found that 24.3% of them involved romantic relationships, with 82% of victims in such cases refusing to testify against the accused. Another Enfold-Project 39A study of 264 cases under Section 6 (aggravated penetrative sexual assault) of POCSO in the same States found that 25.4% of them involved consensual relationships. Therefore, many advocate for a more nuanced legal approach, one that respects the consent of those over 16 while ensuring safeguards against coercion, exploitation, or abuse of authority. They call for shifting the conversation towards informed, open dialogue around sex education, relationships, and consent, rather than blanket criminalisation, which often leads to misuse. In many Western democracies, the consent age is 16, with safeguards against coercion and abuse. Countries like the U.K., Canada, and several EU nations recognise 'close-in-age' exemptions or the 'Romeo-Juliet clause', ensuring that teenagers in consensual relationships with slightly older peers are not criminalised.

ISTOCKPHOTO

The challenge

However, there are genuine concerns on reducing the age of consent. Many believe that such a move would risk weakening the deterrent framework, enabling trafficking and other forms of child abuse under the guise of consent. The current "bright-line rule" – which treats all individuals under 18 as incapable of consenting to sexual activity – reflects a clear legislative intent to create an unambiguous zone of protection for minors under the POCSO Act and BNS. This rule avoids subjective judgments by replacing them with an objective, consistent standard. Individuals against reducing the age of consent acknowledge that courts may exercise "guided judicial discretion" in isolated cases involving consensual adolescent relationships, but they caution against codifying such exceptions in law.

More worryingly, child exploitation often occurs by individuals in positions of trust, such as family members, neighbours, teachers, and caregivers; a 2007 study by the Ministry of Women and Child Development found that over 50% of abusers were known to the child. In such cases, children often lack the emotional independence or capacity to resist or report abuse, making any claim of consent meaningless. Diluting the law would legitimise coercion, suppress disclosures, and contradict the constitutional and statutory commitment to protecting children's best interests. Lowering the age would also risk encouraging younger children to engage in sexual activity prematurely, without the emotional maturity to comprehend its ramifications.

Parliament has consistently rejected proposals to lower the age of consent. The Justice Verma Committee had recommended keeping it at 16 under IPC Section 375, but Parliament chose to raise it to 18 in 2013, aligning with the POCSO framework. The 240th Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Resource Development (2011) rejected recognising minor consent in the POCSO Bill, stating that willingness or maturity was legally irrelevant. Similarly, the 167th Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs (2012) supported raising the age to 18 and opposed any 'close-in-age' exemption. Most recently, the Law Commission's 283rd Report (2023) on the age of consent warned that reducing the age of consent would render POCSO a "paper law", undermining efforts to combat child marriage, prostitution, and trafficking.

Legal opinions

Time and again, courts have faced the tough task of upholding the letter of the law while recognising that its application, in some cases, can inflict real harm on those it seeks to protect. In *State versus Hitesh* (2025), the Delhi High Court (HC) held that "...societal and legal views on adolescent love should emphasise the rights of young individuals to engage in romantic relationships that are free from exploitation and abuse.... The law should evolve to acknowledge and respect these relationships, as long as they are consensual and free from coercion."

Similarly, the Bombay HC in *Ashik Ramjaii Ansari versus State of Maharashtra* (2023) held that sexual autonomy includes both the 'right to engage' in consensual activity and the 'right to protection' from sexual aggression, and that recognising both is key to respecting human sexual dignity.

However, in *Mohd. Rafayat Ali versus State of Delhi*, the Delhi HC, asserted that "consent is legally immaterial" under POCSO if the victim is under 18. Most notably, on August 20, 2024, the Supreme Court overturned a controversial Calcutta HC ruling that acquitted a man in a POCSO case involving a 14-year-old girl, reaffirming that POCSO does not recognise 'consensual sex' with minors. Yet, later invoking Article 142 (extraordinary jurisdiction), the top court declined to impose a sentence despite conviction, noting the girl did not view the incident as a crime and had suffered more from the legal process than the act itself, but it also stated that the judgment should not be treated as precedent.

More recently, on August 19, 2025, in a hearing of a case at the SC, Justice B.V. Nagarathna observed that romantic relationships between persons on the verge of majority age should be seen differently. "Look at the trauma the girl undergoes if she loves a boy and he is sent to jail, because her parents would file a POCSO case to cover the elopement", Justice Nagarathna observed.

The road ahead

While reducing the age of consent is within the jurisdiction of Parliament, the SC must step in to clarify the growing interpretational divide between the statutory framework and HC rulings, ensuring consistency for investigating agencies and lower courts alike. Moreover, laws alone cannot address the layered and complex realities of adolescent life. For real impact, we need a holistic approach with access to comprehensive sex education, respect for young people's autonomy, accessible sexual and reproductive health services, gender-sensitive and responsive law enforcement, and, above all, a social ecosystem that supports adolescents, especially girls, when they find themselves at odds with their families.

Data from studies like Enfold paint a clear picture – there are too many cases, which stem from consensual romance, that are often weaponised by disapproving parents, which clog courts and erodes trust in the system without addressing root issues like poor sex education or cultural taboos around dating. The real challenge involves not merely analysing whether the age of consent should remain 18 or fall back to 16, but how the law can be recalibrated to distinguish genuine adolescent relationships from exploitative ones. A wholesale reduction risks diluting child protection, yet the current blanket rule unjustly criminalises young people navigating consensual intimacy.

Instead of a blanket reduction that could open doors to predators disguising coercion as consent, we need a pragmatic tweak: introduce 'close-in-age' exemptions for 16-18-year-olds, say within a 3-4 year gap, coupled with mandatory judicial reviews to sniff out any foul play, while ramping up school programs on healthy relationships, consent, and emotional resilience. This way, we honour adolescent autonomy without gutting protections, and build a framework where kids learn to navigate love safely, reducing misuse of the law and fostering a more empathetic society.

Kartikey Singh is a lawyer based in New Delhi.

THE GIST

In recent years, the debate over the age of consent has intensified, particularly due to a surge in POCSO cases involving adolescents aged 16-18, where the girl often testifies to 'consensual sex'.

An Enfold study analysing 7,064 POCSO judgments (2016-2020) across Assam, Maharashtra, and West Bengal found that 24.3% of them involved romantic relationships, with 82% of victims in such cases refusing to testify against the accused.

However, there are genuine concerns on reducing the age of consent. Many believe that such a move would risk weakening the deterrent framework, enabling trafficking and other forms of child abuse under the guise of consent.

Helmetless riding tops traffic violation cases in 2025

Last year saw police personnel returning to the streets to book cases, drawing the ire of many

Chetan B.C.
BENGALURU

In 2025, riding without a helmet and driving without a safety belt topped the list of traffic violations in Bengaluru.

However, the numbers have declined compared to previous years, according to ASTraM data accessed by *The Hindu*.

Overall violations also dropped, with the Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) issuing 69.88 lakh challans in 2025. In comparison, more than 80 lakh violations were recorded in 2024, 90 lakh in 2023, and one crore in 2022.

Riding without a helmet accounted for 29.09% of total violations, followed by pillion riders without helmets (16.13%), wrong parking (15.97%), driving without a safety belt (10.46%), jumping traffic signals (9.47%), and no-entry driving (4.33%).

The BTP issues challans for 27 different types of violations.

The data also shows that most of the violations were recorded at police stations covering high-density corridors and market areas. East Bengaluru's Jeevan Bima Nagar recorded the highest number of violations (38,367), followed by HAL Airport Road, Bellandur, Shivajinagar, and Jnanabharathi.

Meanwhile, 2025 also saw the traffic police returning to the streets to intercept vehicles and penalise commuters. The data shows that 87% of challans were issued contactless and 13% through physical contact.

In 2024, 94% of challans were contactless, and 6% involved contact.

However, many are unhappy with this change, saying it not only increases malpractices within the department but also poses safety risks, as violators tend to evade police interception.

A biker and a pillion rider travelling without helmets at Indiranagar in Bengaluru on Sunday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

TRACING TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS

Contact or contactless policing?

A senior traffic police officer attributed the decline in violations to a combination of field enforcement and tech-driven policing, saying these measures improve road safety and discipline among commuters.

Rajkumar Dugar, convenor of Citizens for Citizens (C4C), argued that the fall in violations is mainly due to the fear of cameras and contactless booking of cases. "The presence of cameras across the city is always in the back of people's minds, which forces commuters to follow the rules while people try to evade officers who are catching violations on the ground," he said.

No random interception

However, Karthik Reddy, Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic), clarified that on-field enforcement is carried out only for visible violations and that there is no random interception.

"To ensure officers are not demanding money or indulging in unethical practices, we have mandated the use of body-worn cameras. So there is very little scope for harassment of commuters," Mr. Reddy told *The Hindu*. But Mr. Dugar said traffic regulation often takes a back seat when violations are intercepted in the field. "For example, near the Mount Carmel College underpass, there is heavy congestion every day. Instead of managing traffic at the spot, the police are often seen catching violators some distance away," he explained. Mr. Dugar said that this is not an isolated incident, as many commuters have flagged similar issues over the last six months.

Notably, the Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS) was introduced in 2022 to enable contactless enforcement in the city and allow traffic police to focus better on on-ground traffic regulation.

Safety issues

Mr. Dugar suggested that instead of on-field interception, technology should be strengthened and fine collection practices for camera-recorded violations improved. "The BTP should introduce a system that gives violators 60 to 90 days to clear fines and send challans regularly. For those who do not clear their fines, the amount should be increased by a fixed percentage after the deadline," he said.

Akshay Mitra, a techie, suggested that the BTP should strengthen the technology to penalise speed-limit violations across the city and other violations that pose risks to commuters and affect road safety.

The data also shows that safety-related violations, apart from not wearing helmets and seat belts, are booked less frequently. Speeding, a major cause of fatal accidents, especially on the city's outskirts, receives less attention. The data shows that only 40,439 overspeeding cases and 18,887 cases of riding on footpaths were booked in 2025, even though these rules are widely violated.

Similarly, in the case of footpath parking, which forces pedestrians to walk on the road and increases safety risks, 1.28 lakh cases were booked.

Mr. Mitra said the BTP should focus more on these violations on the ground, rather than primarily targeting helmetless riding and similar offences.

(This is the last of a three-part series, in which we look at trends and patterns in Bengaluru's traffic violations.)

Rules breach

Violation	Cases (in lakhs)
Riding without helmet	20.33
Pillion rider without helmet	11.27
Wrong parking	11.16
Driving without safety belt	7.59
Jumping signal	6.62
No entry zone	3.02

Police stations that recorded most violations
(Till November 2025)

Police station	Violations
Jeevan Bima Nagar	38,367
HAL Airport	32,263
Bellandur	24,804
Shivajinagar	24,509
Jnana Bharathi	22,162

YouTube channel booked for uploading misleading PU exam paper

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The North Division Cyber Crime police have registered a case against a YouTube channel for allegedly uploading a question paper resembling the official board examination paper during the ongoing preparatory examinations for Pre-University (PU) students. The FIR was registered on January 9 following a complaint lodged by Raju N., Joint Director of the Department of Pre-University Education, Bengaluru.

According to the complaint, the Hindi language preparatory examination for PU students was scheduled to be held on January 9.

However, on January 8 around 4 p.m., it came to the notice of the department that a YouTube channel run by an account named NiranjanShetty@NiranjanShetty9581 had prepared and uploaded a Hindi question paper closely modelled on the official format prescribed by the Department of PU Education.

The uploaded content allegedly mimicked the structure and presentation of the official board paper, which officials said could mislead students.

Nearly 10,000 cases booked against motorists for using high beams in city limits

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) have booked nearly 10,000 cases against motorists for using high beams, during the "Dazzling Light" special drive, in four days.

The special drive, aimed at improving road safety and reducing accidents caused by the glare of the headlights, began on January 7, and the enforcement has only intensified. The BTP have booked 9,782 cases as of January 10. On Saturday night alone, the BTP booked 1,843 cases.

Police say the use of high beams can temporarily blind the road users and can lead to serious accidents

According to division-wise data released by the BTP, the West Division reported the highest number of violations, with 1,025 cases booked on the night of January 10 and 4,994 cases since January 7.

This was followed by the South Division with 331 cases on the night of January 10 and 1,858 cases cumulatively.

Similarly, the East Division recorded 329 cases on the night and 1,731 cases in total, while the North Division registered 158 cases and 1,199 cases since the start of the drive.

The traffic police officials said the drive is aimed at creating awareness among motorists about the dangers of using high beams in the city limits. The use of high beams can temporarily blind the road users and can lead to serious accidents, the police said.

On social media, the BTP have urged motorists to follow traffic rules and switch to low-beams while driving in the city limits, reiterating their message: "Be a Responsible Driver-Switch to Low Beam."

ISEC AGM held

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC) hosted its 53rd Annual General Meeting on Saturday. Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot highlighted the institute's pivotal role in shaping inclusive and evidence-based policies.

ISEC vice-president Ashok Dalwai and others were present on the occasion.

CENTRAL RAILWAY
SOLAPUR DIVISION
COMMERCIAL WORK

Notification No. : GEM/2025/B/6919710 Dt- 09.01.2026, DRM(C) Office solapur Division, invites Open E-tender through Two Packet system for Housekeeping cleaning contract at Solapur, Latur and Pandharpur goods sheds. **A. Name of Work: Tender for Housekeeping and Cleaning contract at Solapur (SUR), Latur (LUR) and Pandharpur (PVR) Goods sheds of Solapur Division for a period of 02 years on activity basis.** B. Contract Period: **2 yrs** C. Estimated Bid Value: **₹1,05,47,443.59** D.Earnest Money Deposit: **₹2,02,740** E. Tender Closing Date & Time: **30.01.2026 at 17:00Hrs.** F. **Tender Document Details Tender Document and complete details available on the Ge.M portal. In case of any query, Contact:** Sr. DCM office, DRM Office, Solapur. Contact No. : 0217-72312207, 6386427873, E-MAIL: srdcm@railnet.gov.in. ANJ-12

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CENTRAL RAILWAY
सोलापुर मण्डल
इंजीनियरिंग कार्य

मध्य रेल कार्यालय मंडल रेल प्रबंधक (कार्य) सोलापुर भारत के राष्ट्रपति के लिए और उनकी ओर से दिनांक को बजे तक निम्नलिखित कार्यों के लिए ई–निविदा आमंत्रित करते है : **01 कार्य का नाम : Development work at Osmanabad Good shed. 02 अनुमानित लागत : ₹ 14,04,56,375.21, 03 बयाना रक्कम : ₹8,52,300.00. 04 समापन की अवधी :12(Twelve) Months, 05 अनुरक्षण की अवधी : 24(Twenty Four) Months, 06. ई निविदा फार्म की किमत :** Nil, 07 **वेबसाइट ई निविदा फार्म जमा करने की अंतिम तरिख और समय:** 06/02/2026 up to 15:00 hrs. **08 वेबसाइट ई निविदा खोलने की तरिख और समय:** 06/02/2026 after 15:30 hrs. **09 वेबसाइट विवरण : www.ireps.gov.in,** नोट : संभावित निविदाकर्ताओं को सलाह दी जाती है कि वे निविदा बंद होने की तिथि से पहले इस वेबसाइट पर बार–बार जाएं ताकि इस निविदा वेबसाइट के लिए जारी किए किसी भी परिवर्तन/शुद्धिपत्र को नोट कर सकें : **www.ieps.gov.in** ANJ-11

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PUBLIC NOTICE

We are undertaking an investigation of the title in relation to certain immovable properties more fully described in the '**Schedule**' hereto and hereinafter collectively referred to as '**Schedule Properties**'. The said title due diligence is being conducted for and on behalf of our Client who is desirous of entering into certain transaction in relation to the Schedule Properties. The present Owners of the Schedule Properties mentioned in the Schedule herein below **(Owners)** have represented to our Client that they are the absolute owners of the Schedule Properties and have unrestricted rights of alienation over the same.

Notice is hereby given to the general public that any person/s other than the present Owners, asserting any right, title, charge, lien, claim/s or any interest whatsoever in respect of the Schedule Properties are hereby called upon to submit to the undersigned, their claim/s, if any, over the Schedule Properties or their objections, if any, to the aforementioned transaction. The said claim/s or objections must be in writing, together with documentary proof of such claim/s or objections, so as to reach us at the address given below within a period of **15 (Fifteen)** days from the date of publication of this Notice. If no such claim/s or objections are received within the aforementioned time period, it shall be deemed that no one else other than the Owners has/ have any right, title, interest or claim/s in respect of the Schedule Properties and our Client would be at liberty to proceed with the said transaction in connection with the Schedule Properties.

SCHEDULE
(Description of the Schedule Properties)

All that piece and parcel of the immovable properties, situated at **Heggadihalli Village, Tubagere Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.** detailed in the table herein below:

Sl. No.	Survey Number	Extent	Boundaries				Present Owner
			East	West	North	South	
1.	Survey No. 135/5	08 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 135/2	Land bearing Survey No. 134/2	Land bearing Survey No. 135/4	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 135/6 and 135/7	Mr. Kallikote Krishnappa, son of Late Mr. Narasimhappa, his wife, Mrs. Savithramma and son, Mr. K. Sunil. Mr. Kallikote Krishnappa, Mrs. Savithramma and Mr. K. Sunil have executed an Agreement For Sale dated 26.06.2025 with Mrs. Radhika Madhusudan.
2.	Survey No. 136/3	10 Guntas	Lands bearing Survey No. 136/2 and 136/7	Lands bearing Survey No. 136/4 and 136/8	Land bearing Survey No. 137/1	Land bearing Survey No. 136/5	
3.	Survey No. 136/13	06 Guntas	Lands bearing Survey Nos.136/12, 136/20 and 136/11	Land bearing Survey No. 136/2	Land bearing Survey No. 137/1	Land bearing Survey No. 136/14	Mrs. Munirathnamma, wife of Mr. Ramachandrappa
4.	Survey No. 136/12	04 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 136/10	Land bearing Survey No. 136/13	Lands bearing Survey Nos.137/1 and 137/4	Land bearing Survey No. 136/20	
5.	Survey No. 136/20	02 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 136/10	Land bearing Survey No. 136/13	Land bearing Survey No. 136/12	Land bearing Survey No. 136/11	Mr. S. Srinivas, son of Mr. Seetharamaiah
6.	Survey No. 137/4	12 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 137/3	Land bearing Survey No. 137/1	Road	Land bearing Survey No. 136/12	
7.	Survey No. 131/2	33 Guntas	Lands bearing Survey No. 133/2 and 133/4	Land bearing Survey No. 131/3	Land bearing Survey No. 138	Land bearing Survey No. 132/7	Mrs. Sheela Gopal, wife of Late Mr. Gopal Ramnarayan
8.	Survey No. 131/3	18 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 131/2	Land bearing Survey No. 131/1	Land bearing Survey No. 138	Land bearing Survey No. 132/7	
9.	Survey No. 132/7	19 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 133/4	Land bearing Survey No. 132/6	Lands bearing Survey No. 131/1, 131/3, and 131/2	Land bearing Survey No. 124	Mr. Suresh Rudrappa Sharoff, son of Late Mr. Rudrappa
10.	Survey No. 133/2	29 Guntas	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 134/1, 134/3 and 134/4	Land bearing Survey No. 131/2	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 137/1, 137/2 and 137/6	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 133/1, 133/3 and 133/4	
11.	Survey No. 133/3	13 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 133/1	Land bearing Survey No. 133/4	Land bearing Survey No. 133/2	Land bearing Survey No. 124	
12.	Survey No. 133/4	13 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 133/3	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 131/2 and 132/7	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 131/2 and 133/2	Land bearing Survey No. 124	
13.	Survey No. 131/1	01 Acre 11 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 133/3	Land bearing Survey No. 130	Land bearing Survey No. 138	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 132/5, 132/6 and 132/7	Green Castle Villas Developers LLP
14.	Portion of Survey No. 136/18	14 Guntas	Remaining portion of Lands in Survey No. 136/18 and Land in Survey No. 120/7	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 136/17, 136/7 and 135/2	Lands bearing Survey Nos.136/14 136/15, 136/16 and 136/17	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 135/3, 135/1A, 135/1B and 135/2	
15.	Portion of Survey No. 136/14	08 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 136/14	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 136/7 and 136/2	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 136/1, 136/10, 136/11 and 136/13	Lands bearing Survey No. 136/18, 136/17, 136/16 and 136/15	
16.	Survey No. 134/4	19 Guntas	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 136/8 and 135/4	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 133/2 and 133/1	Land bearing Survey No. 134/3	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 134/5 and 134/2	
17.	Survey No. 134/5	10 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 134/2	Land bearing Survey No. 133/1	Land bearing Survey No. 134/4	Land bearing Survey No. 124	
18.	Survey No. 134/2	17 Guntas	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 135/4, 135/5, 135/6 and 135/9	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 134/5 and 134/4	Land bearing Survey No. 134/4	Land bearing Survey No. 124	
19.	Survey No. 134/3	10 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 136/8	Land bearing Survey No. 133/2	Land bearing Survey No. 134/1	Land bearing Survey No. 134/4	
20.	Survey No. 133/1	13 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 134/5	Land bearing Survey No. 133/3	Land bearing Survey No. 133/2	Land bearing Survey No. 124	
21.	Survey No. 134/1	10 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 136/4	Land bearing Survey No. 133/2	Land bearing Survey No. 137/1	Land bearing Survey No. 134/3	
22.	Survey No. 135/1A	07 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 135/1B	Land bearing Survey No. 135/2	Land bearing Survey No. 136/18	Land bearing Survey No. 135/10	
23.	Survey No. 135/11	07 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 135/1B	Land bearing Survey No. 135/2	Land bearing Survey No. 135/10	Land bearing Survey No. 135/12	
24.	Survey No. 135/12	07 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 135/1B	Land bearing Survey No. 135/2	Land bearing Survey No. 135/11	Land bearing Survey No. 124	
25.	Survey No. 136/10	06 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 136/1	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 136/12, 136/20 and 136/11	Land bearing Survey No. 137/3	Land bearing Survey No. 136/14	
26.	Survey No. 136/17	06 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 136/18	Land bearing Survey No. 136/16	Land bearing Survey No. 136/14	Lands bearing Survey No. 136/18	
27.	Survey No. 137/3	32 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 137/5	Land bearing Survey No. 137/4	Road	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 136/12, 136/10 and 136/1	
28.	Survey No. 135/3	18.08 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 122/4	Land bearing Survey No. 135/1B	Land bearing Survey No. 136/18	Land bearing Survey No. 124	
29.	Survey No. 135/2	38 Guntas	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 135/1A, 135/10, 135/11, 135/12 and 136/18	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 135/4, 135/5, 135/7 and 135/8	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 136/6, 136/7, and 136/18	Land bearing Survey No. 124	
30.	Survey No. 135/4	26 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 135/2	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 134/4, and 134/2	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 136/6, and 136/8	Land bearing Survey No. 135/5	
31.	Survey No. 135/6	02 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 135/7	Land bearing Survey No. 134/2	Land bearing Survey No. 135/5,	Land bearing Survey No. 135/9	
32.	Survey No. 135/8	02 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 135/2	Land bearing Survey No. 135/9	Land bearing Survey No. 135/7,	Land bearing Survey No. 124	
33.	Survey No. 135/9	02 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 135/8	Land bearing Survey No. 134/2	Land bearing Survey No. 135/6,	Land bearing Survey No. 124	
34.	Survey No. 136/16	06 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 136/17	Land bearing Survey No. 136/15	Land bearing Survey No. 136/14,	Land bearing Survey No. 136/18	
35.	Survey No. 136/15	06 Guntas	Lands bearing Survey No. 136/16	Land bearing Survey No. 136/7	Land bearing Survey No. 136/14,	Land bearing Survey No. 136/18	
36.	Survey No. 136/8	17.08 Guntas	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 136/3, 136/5, 136/6 and 136/9	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 134/3 and 134/4	Land bearing Survey No. 136/4,	Land bearing Survey No. 135/4	
37.	Survey No. 136/2	14 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 136/13	Land bearing Survey No. 136/3	Land bearing Survey No. 137/1,	Land bearing Survey No. 136/7	
38.	Survey No. 136/7	14 Guntas	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 136/15, 136/14 and 136/18	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 136/3, 136/5 and 136/6	Land bearing Survey No. 136/2,	Land bearing Survey No. 135/2	
39.	Survey No. 136/5	04 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 136/7	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 136/8, 136/9	Land bearing Survey No. 136/3,	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 136/6 and 136/9	
40.	Survey No. 136/9	2.08 Guntas	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 136/5 and 136/6	Land bearing Survey No. 136/8	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 136/5 and 136/8	Land bearing Survey No. 136/8	
41.	Survey No. 136/6	04 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 136/7	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 136/8 and 136/9	Land bearing Survey Nos. 136/5	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 135/2 and 135/4	
42.	Survey No. 136/4	08 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 136/3	Land bearing Survey No. 134/1	Land bearing Survey No. 137/1	Land bearing Survey No. 136/8	
43.	Survey No. 136/1	7.08 Guntas	Land bearing Survey No. 136/19	Land bearing Survey No. 136/10	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 137/3 and 137/5	Land bearing Survey No. 136/14	

Sd/-
Mr. Srinivas B.R., Partner
DSK Legal,
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Tel: 080-69548770.

Date : 12.01.2026
Place: Bengaluru

Police invoke POCSO in girl's murder case

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Whitefield police have invoked provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, in the murder of a six-year-old girl against the accused after ascertaining the motive behind the crime, police said on Saturday.

The victim, Shahnaz Khatun, daughter of Inzamam Sheikh, a migrant labourer from West Bengal, was found dead in a drain hours after she went missing on January 5. The police said the child was strangled.

According to the investigators, Inzamam Sheikh had seen his daughter playing in front of the family's makeshift house when he briefly returned home for lunch. When the girl failed to return later in the day, a search was launched, and her body was subsequently recovered.

The police zeroed in on the accused, Yusuf Meer, also a migrant labourer from West Bengal who lived in the same neighbourhood. Meer, who attempted to flee to his hometown with his family, was tracked down and arrested in Odisha a day after the girl was found dead.

The investigators said Meer had earlier had a quarrel with the girl's mother.

To take revenge, he allegedly kidnapped and killed the child while she was playing outside her house.

Though the police initially ruled out sexual assault, fresh evidence prompted the investigators to invoke the POCSO Act, a senior police officer said.

The police said they were awaiting the Forensic Science Laboratory .

Bheemanna Khandre stable: Minister

The Hindu Bureau
KALABURAGI

Minister for Forest Eshwar B. Khandre has said that the health condition of his father, the former Transport Minister, Bheemanna Khandre, is stable.

Speaking to reporters on Sunday, Mr. Khandre said that Bheemana Khandre, who is 102 years old, was admitted to the hospital on Saturday after he developed complications due to age-related ailments and breathing difficulties.

He said that his father has been unwell for about a week and his condition worsened on Friday last.

"Doctors told us that his condition has shown a slight improvement and he is now stable," the Minister said.

Timings
BENGALURU

MONDAY, JAN. 12
RISE 06:45 SET 18:11
RISE 01:14 SET 12:59

TUESDAY, JAN. 13
RISE 06:45 SET 18:11
RISE 02:02 SET 13:40

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 14
RISE 06:45 SET 18:12
RISE 02:53 SET 14:24

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	29	20
Mysuru	27	17
Bengaluru	23	16

Bengaluru Today
24°C The weather will be dry. Day will be pleasant. Night will be cool and hazy. Chances of light rain and thundershower at few places.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
25°C Morning will be cool with mist and haze. Day will be pleasant. Night also will be cool. Dry weather to occur.

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THE HINDU
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ABSTRACT

Strong traditions: INSV Kaundinya, the Indian Navy's stitched sailing vessel, built using ancient Indian techniques, embarks on its maiden voyage to Muscat, Oman, on December 29, 2025. PTI

India's maritime policy: how it has evolved and what lies ahead

India's maritime policy has undergone significant evolution, intricately linked to its historical and geographical context, as explored in 'The Routledge Handbook of Maritime India'. The handbook delves into India's rich maritime history and strategic relationships across the Indian Ocean

Rajiv Bhatia

The two most prominent geographic features of the Indian subcontinent, with India at its centre, are the Himalayas and the Indian Ocean. They not only defined India's geographic boundaries but also shaped its history, culture, and civilisation. While foreigners came to India through the land route in the north to establish empires – some great and some not-so-great – in the south of the Vindhyas, where the presence of the sea is constant, Indians sailed east and west for trade, cultural exchange, and the occasional conquest.

In this broad historical context, a question arises – what is the significance of the maritime domain for India, as viewed through the lenses of history, strategy, economics, and technology? A comprehensive and scholarly work, *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime India*, edited by Alluri Subramanyam Raju and R. Srinivasan, presents a multidimensional response to this fundamental question.

On maritime history

History has taught us the all-pervading significance of the maritime domain. The capabilities of Indian sailors to reach the far corners of the west and the east in ancient and medieval times is a source of pride and inspiration. As Jawaharlal Nehru observed, "History has shown that whatever power controls the Indian Ocean has, in the first instance, India's seaborne trade at her mercy, and, in the second, India's very independence itself."

The first part of the handbook, comprising five essays by different scholars, traces the historical evolution of India's outward reach, focusing on the Cholas, the Marathas, Europeans and Indo-Arab maritime trade. Author N. Manoharan called the Cholas "The Nautical Tigers." The chapter on scholar-diplomat K. M. Panikkar critically analyses his ideas and establishes their continuing relevance to contemporary geopolitics. Varun Sahni, in his futuristic take, urges that the Indian Ocean needs to be viewed "less as a space – an ocean of transit – and more as a place – the home of a majority of the world's human population and settlements".

India's maritime strategy

Chapters in the book shed light on India's strategy and relations with multiple nations, including Australia, Japan, France, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Myanmar, Thailand, Indonesia, and China. India took the initiative to demarcate its maritime boundaries with all its neighbours and succeeded in every case, except Pakistan. The latter delayed a settlement based on "motivated assumptions." Huo Wenle's chapter on Sino-Indian maritime rivalry offers a deep dive into the thinking of Chinese and Indian scholars and recommends extensive discussions between the two governments to lay down the rules of engagement on the high seas. The aim should be to prevent "the clash of interests that are detrimental to both nations." Other chapters bring out the reasons for the turnaround, in the mid-1980s, in India-Australia ties in the maritime domain; the essential similarities between India and Japan; and the rationale of the Indo-Pacific vision for India and France for maritime multilateralism.

In another cluster of four chapters, the book endeavours to analyse maritime institutions, connectivity, and governance of the following South Asian states – India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and China. Zou Zhengxin presents a comparative analysis of the maritime security governance of India and China to bring out the risks of a "zero-sum game evolving owing to the U.S. influence." He recommends joint consultative mechanisms to advance maritime development. R. Srinivasan's chapter on Sri Lanka demonstrates how "pitfalls" such as corruption, clan politics, and a lack of enlightened leadership drive nations to join China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), thereby undermining sound maritime governance.

Power projection

As per the handbook, India has been doing quite well in shaping its maritime power projection. In the first decade of this century, the Indian Navy played a stellar role in curbing piracy in the Arabian Sea. This marked the Navy's transformation from an observer into a net security provider. Two other chapters provide a critical analysis of ongoing geopolitical rivalries: one argues for "a hedging system" that considers the U.S. strategy for the Indo-Pacific, while another advocates for increasing India's maritime presence, thereby creating a "political and economic confluence" of like-minded regional powers.

Other essayists have shed light on India's vision, strengths, and partnerships in the Indo-Pacific, a concept that has dominated strategic discourse over the past two decades. In recent years, its salience has been eroded somewhat by crises in other geographies (Ukraine, Gaza, Iran, Red Sea, and Venezuela) as well as by the new U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS) 2025, which takes a softer view of China as an economic competitor rather than as a geopolitical adversary. How India needs to refine its Indo-Pacific strategy in this context warrants a separate debate.

The final cluster of seven chapters addresses economic and technological developments in the maritime domain. A variety of topics, ranging from underwater domain awareness (UDA) and underwater systems to maritime security; the Blue Economy revolution and shift; climate resilience; and coastal security have been addressed in a highly thoughtful manner. With an abiding interest in all dimensions of the Blue Economy, the contributors have successfully packed the handbook with the latest research and analyses to benefit readers. Recommendations made in this volume merit close consideration by policymakers.

Rajiv Bhatia, Distinguished Fellow at the Gateway House, is a former Ambassador with extensive diplomatic experience in several Indian Ocean capitals.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

A quiz on the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda on his 163rd birth anniversary

V.V. Ramanan

QUESTION 1
Swami Vivekananda, born Narendranath Dutta, was an accomplished musician. Which instrument did he play proficiently?

QUESTION 2
Before meeting Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Vivekananda was deeply influenced by which reform movement but later grew dissatisfied with it?

QUESTION 3
Apart from encouraging Narendranath, what important singular suggestion did Ajit Singh of Khetri ask the former to embrace?

QUESTION 4
Where did Narendranath and other disciples decide to make a new math after the passing of Sri Ramakrishna, one which is considered the first Ramakrishna Math?

QUESTION 5
Which three-word Mahavakya (Great Saying) from the Chandogya Upanishad formed the metaphysical backbone of Vivekananda's understanding of Advaita Vedanta?

QUESTION 6
What was unusual about Vivekananda's prediction about his own death, and how accurate was it?

Visual question: Name this visionary and nation-builder who was inspired by Swami Vivekananda to start an institution of higher learning that is now one of the most prestigious edifices in the country. Name the institution too.
THE HINDU ARCHIVES

Questions and Answers to the January 9 edition of the daily quiz: 1. This American President's second term ended early when he had to resign from office, as a result of the Watergate scandal. **Ans: Richard Nixon**
2. This American actor is considered one of the most prolific and well-established actors of his generation. **Ans: J.K. Simmons**
3. Mahmoud Abbas was elected President of this country in 2005. **Ans: Palestine**
4. In 2001, Apple introduced this digital media player application. **Ans: iTunes**
Visual: Identify this New Zealand writer. **Ans: Katherine Mansfield**
Early Birds: Gaurav Deshmukh| Soumendra Banerjee| Jagrati Shukla| Abhay Krishan| Sudhakar Rao Desai

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

I crashed out as soon as I came home

She sounded chirpy on the phone but when I met her in person she was very shy

S. Upendran

"Tried calling you around 9 last night, but you didn't pick up. Where were you..."

"Sorry about that! Believe it or not, I was sound asleep by 8:30."

"Really? You're someone who goes to be bed rather late, aren't you?"

"Went on a long trek with Sujatha and her gang. I was so exhausted that I crashed out as soon as I returned home."

"You crashed out?"

"When you say that you 'crashed out', what you're suggesting is that you fell asleep very quickly. The expression is used in informal contexts."

"I see! In other words, you were so tired that you just couldn't stay awake."

"That's right! After a heavy meal, I just crashed out on the new sofa."

"How about this example? After a day of cricket in the hot sun, I expect the kids to crash out after dinner."

"Sounds good! For all you know, they might crash out even before dinner!"

"What about you? Do you crash out as soon as your head hits the pillow? Or does it take you some time to actually ..."

"I'm not that lucky, I'm afraid! It takes me a long time to fall asleep. After lying down, I toss and turn for some time before I eventually..."

"Toss and turn? Does it mean to be restless?"

"That's right! When you toss and turn in bed, you keep changing your position in order..."

"You're hoping to find a comfortable position..."

"It could be that! Or it could be that you're worried about something. One can also toss and turn while sleeping."

"If you do that, it probably suggests that you're restless. The sleep is not deep."

"Very good! I think the baby is going to come down with something. She was tossing and turning all night."

"After a night of tossing and turning, Anand woke up in the morning feeling extremely tired."

"Great example! I get up at 3:00 in the morning, and then I toss and turn till I get out of bed at 5:00."

"I don't have any such problem. No tossing and turning. I sleep like a log. And when I wake up, I'm my usual ...By the way, how is c..h..i..r..p..y pronounced?"

"The first syllable rhymes with 'sir', 'stir' and 'fur', and the following 'y' sounds like the 'i' in 'pit', 'kit' and 'bit'. The word is pronounced 'CHER-pi' with the stress on the first syllable. Any idea what the word means?"

"Of course, I do! When you say that someone is a chirpy individual, what you're suggesting is that he is a very happy person."

"Not just happy, but very bubbly. He is someone who is full of life. He is very energetic and enjoys talking."

upendrankye@gmail.com

Word of the day

Corpulent:
excessively fat

Synonyms: obese, rotund, weighty

Usage: *Even though I have been on a diet, I am still rather corpulent.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/corpulentpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈkɔːpjələnt/, /ˈkɔːpjʊlənt/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

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Whose English is it?

An interview with ELT expert Alan Maley on native-speakerism in English

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Albert P'Rayan

"Native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) preferred". "Must be a native English speaker with an American or British accent". "Anglo-Indian teachers can apply." Such statements are commonly found in advertisements for English teaching positions.

Native-speakerism in English is an ideology that privileges British or American English and assumes that native speakers are inherently more qualified to teach English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL). This perpetuates discriminatory practices in English language teaching (ELT), where highly proficient and professionally trained non-native teachers are often marginalised, their competence questioned, and their expertise undervalued.

In recent decades, ELT professionals advocating inclusivity and equity have increasingly challenged this ideology. Grounded in the concept of World Englishes – the diverse and dynamic varieties of English used worldwide – they argue that these should be acknowledged, respected, and valued rather than hierarchically ranked.

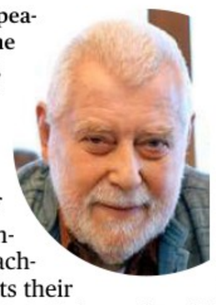
In this interview, Alan Maley, a renowned ELT expert and advocate of Global English, discusses the origins of native-speakerism, the reasons for its persistence, its continuing impact on the profession worldwide, and the need to dismantle it.

How do you conceptualise native-speakerism within the context of English language teaching?

The dominance of languages is closely linked to economic, military, cultural, and political power. English has achieved unprecedented global reach. As a result, English language teaching has become a highly profitable international industry. Since the 1960s, demand for English has grown exponentially, with the U.K. and the U.S. dominating teacher education, research, publishing, and testing. Institutions offering tests and qualifications such as TOEFL, IELTS, CELTA, and DELTA are largely based in these countries. This concentration of authority reinforces the belief that native speakers are inherently better teachers.

To what extent do Western-centric models of ELT continue to sustain native-speakerism?

The professionalisation of ELT has largely been driven by English-speaking countries. Dictionaries, grammars, qualifications, and assessments have standardised English and concentrated control over the language in metropolitan centres. Standardisation enables reification – turning language into an object – which then allows commodification. Western models of "standard" English therefore underpin the continuing assumption of native-speaker superiority.



How does native-speakerism affect the quality, diversity, and inclusivity of ELT worldwide?

Clearly, native-speakerism has the effect of undervaluing non-native speaker teachers, which impacts their self-esteem and potentially reduces their motivation for professional development. In this respect, it can diminish the quality of the teaching on offer.

But we also need to remember that, statistically, native-speaker teachers of English will always be in a minority. As the level of expertise grows in countries around the world, so the value of non-native speaker teachers is enhanced. We can observe this in the invaluable work of language teacher associations in many countries worldwide. So, I think the credibility of the native-speaker hegemony is on the wane, though it has by no means disappeared.

What steps can institutions take to ensure more equitable recruitment practices?

This is close to my heart. In 1998, I was invited to set up an M.A. programme at a prestigious private university in Thailand. I accepted on the condition that I would have a free hand in appointing faculty. As our students were from across Asia, I appointed lecturers of diverse nationalities: Indian, Singaporean, Italian, Burmese, Dutch and Thai. I was the only native speaker. This caused consternation in the upper echelons of the university, and also among our first batches of students, who asked, "Where are the native speakers?" However, the quality of the course soon established our reputation, showing that a more inclusive policy can work.

How do deeply held beliefs about "standard" or "correct" English continue to reinforce native-speakerism, even when inclusive practices are demonstrably effective?

Language use is inherently variable and constantly changing, yet humans attempt to codify and standardise it. Standardisation serves practical purposes, but it is also linked to power, control, and nation-building. So-called "standard English" is, therefore, a convenient fiction. While one or two standard varieties may be useful for international communication, learners should be prepared to encounter multiple Englishes.

What concrete measures can counter native-speakerist assumptions?

Teacher educators play a key role in raising awareness, and publishers and institutions such as the British Council are increasingly open to questioning long-held beliefs about native-speaker superiority.

How do you envision the future of ELT beyond native-speakerism?

We must rethink how English is taught and reassess its role as a global language. This reorientation allows us to imagine a more inclusive ELT profession – one that values competence over origin, embraces linguistic diversity, and recognises English as a shared global resource rather than the property of a privileged few.

**The term World Englishes was introduced by linguist Braj Kachru at the 1984 TESOL Conference held in Houston, Texas, the U.S.*

The writer is an ELT resource person and education columnist.
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Start afresh

Uncertain about your career options? Low on self-confidence? This column may help

OFF THE EDGE
Nandini Raman

I completed M.Tech in Construction Technology but could not secure a job. After several unsuccessful attempts at government exams, I am now working as a driver in a central police force. I feel like a failure, struggling with a lack of clarity and direction. Bharath

Dear Bharath,

You are resilient in the face of adversity and have taken a job for your survival. This shows your sense of responsibility, emotional maturity, and willingness to work. This matters more than any job title. You can re-enter the engineering and construction field. Target realistic jobs like a site engineer, quality engineer, quantity surveyor, billing engineer, safety officer, and construction planner. You may need to complete short-term practical certification in Quantity Surveying, AutoCAD, Revit, Primavera P6, Construction Project Management, or QA/QC in civil engineering.

You can also explore technical/engineering roles within CAPF, disaster management, infrastructure wings (BSF water wing, CPWD collaboration, BRO support roles), police housing and construction departments, civil engineering wings of paramilitary organisations. You can also shift to a stable technical government job through the SSC JE (Civil), RRB JE or state PSC AE/JE, CPWD JE and so on.

If you want a fresh start, try areas like operations, facility management, logistics management, government contract project management, technical writing and IT support (with basic courses).

I completed my graduation and postgraduation in Hindi Literature, and have been preparing for the UPSC since 2023. I have been unsuccessful so far. I have been seeking jobs related to my degrees, but in vain. What do I do? Raju

Dear Raju,

Many graduates who prepare for UPSC reach a point where they feel this way. To choose the right path, think about what you really enjoy and what you want to do. Do you still want to pursue UPSC or would any government job do? What about roles such as taking the SSC or state PSC exams, which are a lot easier than the UPSC?

Do you enjoy teaching or writing? You could do a B.Ed and take the CTET and TGT/PGT (Hindi) to teach in schools. NET in Hindi is an option for lecturership in college. You can also consider being a content writer for news portals, digital content companies, education platforms, PR companies and so on. Editing and proof-reading books at publishing houses and newspapers is another path. You could also be a translator in a government or private organisation.

I am pursuing UG Honours in Sociology. Apart from UPSC, what are my career options? Nived

Dear Nived,

If you like working on real issues, the Social Development Sector is a natural fit. Roles include social worker, project/field coordinator, outreach worker, and so on across government organisations and NGOs. If you do an HR certification or pursue

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

an MBA in HR/HRM after graduation, you can move to corporate HR as an employee relations officer and so on. Other options include content creation, social media manager, communications associate or documentation officer. Many companies prefer social science graduates for consumer behaviour roles in Market Research and Data Analysis.

If you enjoy UPSC-type subjects but want a career outside exams, explore public policy and governance roles such as policy research associate, programme officer, and so on in think tanks. If you do a B.Ed., you can teach Sociology in schools at the senior level. Foundations involved in CSR require people skilled in research, documentation, community work and communication.

Consider doing a Master's in Sociology, Social Work, Development Studies, Public Policy/Administration, Gender Studies, Rural Development or an MBA in HR, Marketing to improve your profile.

I have a B.Sc. in Physics and a Master's in Environmental Science. I am confused about whether to for government exams or consider other options? Udhaya

Dear Udhaya,

Prepare for government exams but also build skills in Environmental Science, so that you have a plan B. If you feel unsure and want to arrive at a stable academic career, check UGC NET, which opens doors to teaching jobs, Research fellowships (JRF) or a Ph.D., which can strengthen your research career. Focus on GIS, EIA, ESG Reporting and Environmental Data Analytics can bring you roles in Sustainability and climate-related jobs. Do short courses in ESG (IFRS, GRI), Carbon Footprinting, and Environmental Data Analysis (Python + GIS + Excel).

Disclaimer: This column is merely a guiding voice and provides advice and suggestions on education and careers.

The writer is a practising counsellor and a trainer. Send your questions to eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com with the subject line Off the Edge

SAVE THE DATE

Admissions
Symbiosis International (Deemed University) has opened registrations for the Symbiosis Entrance Test (SET 2026) and Symbiosis Institute of Technology Engineering Entrance Exam (SITEEE 2026) for admission to its full-time UG programmes.
Eligibility: For SET 2026, minimum 50% in Class 12 board exam (45% for SC/ST students). For SITEEE 2026, minimum 45% in 10+2 (40% for SC/ST students) with Physics and Maths compulsory and one subject from Chemistry, Computer Science, Electronics, Information Technology, Biology, Informatics Practices, Biotechnology, Technical Vocational subjects, Agriculture, Engineering Graphics, Business Studies, or Entrepreneurship.
Deadline: April 15
www.set-test.org

SOIL Institute invites applications for its PG Diploma in Management.
Eligibility: A Bachelor's degree in any discipline from a recognised university; valid scores from CAT, XAT, NMAT, or GMAT, or the SOIL Aptitude Test.
Deadline: January 18
www.soil.edu.in/

GREAT Scholarships
The British Council has announced the GREAT Scholarships 2026-27 in partnership with the U.K. government's GREAT Britain campaign. These scholarships support Indian students with a proven record of academic excellence to pursue postgraduate studies in the U.K. For the 2026–27 academic year, 12 postgraduate scholarships are being offered by leading universities across a range of subjects. Each scholarship provides a minimum of £10,000 towards tuition fees for a one-year taught postgraduate course. These are jointly funded by the U.K. government's GREAT Britain Campaign, the British Council, and the institutions. For details, visit https://shorturl.at/loG7V

Inceptrix
The Department of Computer Science and Engineering at JAIN Deemed-to-be University will host the second edition of Inceptrix, a national-level, hackathon-driven technical event on February 27 and 28, 2026. The event will feature competitive hackathons, hands on workshops, and expert led sessions.
Eligibility: Students from engineering and technology disciplines disciplines across institutions
Deadline: January 31
https://inceptrix.in/

SCHOLARSHIPS

Teach for India Fellowship
An initiative from Teach for India
Eligibility: Indian citizens or Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) who will graduate by June/July.
Rewards: ₹25,344 a month and other benefits.
Application: Online
Deadline: February 8
www.b4s.in/edge/TFIF6

ICJ Judicial Fellowship
An initiative from the International Court of Justice.
Eligibility: Recent Law graduates not more than 31 years, are nominated by a university and have an excellent command of English or French.
Rewards: Financial assistance, travel, and health insurance expenditures.
Deadline: February 5
Application: Online
www.b4s.in/edge/ICJJ1

Bath Global Excellence Scholarship
Offered by the University of Bath, the U.K.
Eligibility: Those who have an admission offer for a full-time taught Master's course in the Faculty of Engineering and Design, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, or the Faculty of Science for September 2026.
Rewards: £10,000
Application: Online
Deadline: February 4
www.b4s.in/edge/BATH1

Courtesy: Buddy4study.com

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Minister inspects work to replace dam crest gates

The Hindu Bureau
KALABURAGI

Minister for Backward Classes Welfare, Kannada and Culture and Koppal district in-charge Shivraj S. Tangadagi on Sunday visited the Tungabhadra Dam near Hosapete to inspect the ongoing work to replace crest gates and reviewed the progress of work with senior officials.

The large-scale replacement work was taken up following the snapping of the chain link of Crest Gate No 19 on August 10, 2024 raising serious concerns about the safety of the decades-old gates at the reservoir.

Speaking to the media at the worksite, Mr. Tangadagi said that the decision to replace the ageing crest gates was taken after a high-level meeting convened ahead of the Winter Session of the State Legislature.

"The replacement work has already begun. The installation of one gate, Crest Gate No 18, has been completed successfully. It took eight days to install one gate," he said.

He noted that initially the contractor proposed installing six gates a month, at the rate of about five days per gate. "After installing the first gate and gaining confidence, the team is now saying that they can install eight gates a month. As per the contract, dismantling all 33 old gates and installing new ones should be completed by June 2026," he said.

The Minister said that while the plan is to deploy one team for dismantling old gates and two teams for installation, the contractor has deployed two teams each for the works.

Local body polls: BJP central leaders for pact

Local leaders of BJP and Janata Dal (S) prefer going it alone in the elections; however, the final decision is yet to be taken on the issue

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Amid public rhetoric by BJP and Janata Dal (Secular) leaders over the fate of alliance in the election to the local bodies, the possibility of the two parties going to polls together instead of "friendly fights" at the ward level has not been ruled out.

"There could be some kind of arrangement between the NDA partners to fight the election together," JD(S) sources indicated.

JD(S) Youth president Nikhil Kumaraswamy also said on Friday that there had been no decision yet on parties contesting independently.

Sources said, "Irrespective of what local leaders are speaking, the BJP central leadership is keen on facing zilla panchayats and taluk panchayats in an alliance. Focus is to secure power." It is learnt that the BJP central leadership has indicated to the JD (S) leadership that it is important to defeat Congress in these elections before the big election to the Legislative Assembly in 2028.

Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy, BJP State president B.Y. Vijayendra, and Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok during a press meet in Bengaluru on Saturday. SUDHAKARA JAIN

"If an arrangement cannot be hammered out eventually, district units will be allowed to take decisions," the sources said.

At the same time, local leaders of both the parties say they prefer going it alone in the local body polls as they fear that an alliance for these polls would mean causing heartburn among their cadre.

"The local body polls are an opportunity to politically empower the cadre. An alliance in these polls poses the threat of losing the cadre in some cases due to disappointment of not getting ticket to contest, particularly in the Old Mysore region where both the parties have their presence," observed an alliance leader.

"But the party central leaders may be looking at sending a strong political message that it is possible for the BJP and JD(S) to gain political ground if they come together much against the common belief that the ruling party would have advantage in the local body polls. While they have a political point, the leaders of both the BJP and JD(S) will have a tough time in convincing their respective cadre and taking them along," he observed.

Echoing similar view, another coalition leader made it clear that the BJP and JD(S) top leaders were waiting to assess the political fallout of the ongoing leadership tussle in the government before taking a call on the local body polls for which elections were yet to be announced.

Deve Gowda's stand

Sources said that the JD(S) supremo and former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda's assertion that his party would go it alone in the local body election should not be seen as his party's stand as it was learnt to be a response to BJP State President B.Y. Vijayendra's statement on BJP having the potential to independently win the Assembly elections.

Meanwhile, the BJP has already commenced district-level meetings of its organisational leaders to prepare for the local body polls. Interestingly, leaders of the Mandya district unit of the party publicly took exception to Mr. Gowda's statement on going it alone and declared that they too wanted to fight independently.

Sources in the party sought to downplay this episode by attributing it to the turf-war in this Vokkaliga hotbed of politics. But they made it clear that such developments were bound to be watched by the party central leaders.

Meanwhile, the JD(S) has asked its leaders not to independently air their opinions on the alliance in public, and another meeting is likely to be called to convey the message.

CORRIDORS OF POWER

A film and a language row

The State government appears yet to fully acknowledge the linguistic realities faced by Kannada speakers in Kerala's border district of Kasaragod. The issue was vividly portrayed in the 2018 Kannada blockbuster *Sarkari Hiriya Prathamika Shale, Kasaragod*, directed and produced by Rishab Shetty, which highlighted the plight of a Kannada-medium school in the region. The film, starring Anant Nag, Pramod Shetty, and others, won the National Award for Best Children's Film at the 66th National Film Awards.

With elections approaching, the Kerala government's proposal to make Malayalam the first language in Kannada-medium schools as well is likely to further marginalise Kannada education in Kasaragod. Although Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has opposed this move, calling it an infringement on the rights of linguistic minorities, concrete steps are needed to restore and protect the use of Kannada in schools along the border. As Mr. Siddaramaiah observed, "no language stands against another language." The Kerala government, which often speaks of unity in diversity, must withdraw the proposed Bill to ensure that India continues to remain a cradle of multilingualism, multiculturalism, and religious harmony, many activists have argued.

Media as high command

With the Congress high command yet to announce a timeline for a leadership change in Karnataka, former MP D.K. Suresh *(pictured)* quipped that the media itself should decide the "auspicious date" for appointing his brother and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar as Chief Minister.

In a remark seen as a subtle dig at the party's Central leadership, Mr. Suresh said that, for now, the media was his "high command." "I want to see my brother in the Chief Minister's chair. Let the media choose the auspicious day," he told reporters. He has also made several visits to Delhi to discuss the leadership issue with senior party leaders. Meanwhile, there is no consensus within the ruling Congress on the timing of any change, if at all it happens. Some MLAs claim that Mr. Shivakumar could take over after Sankranti festival on January 15, while others believe the transition will not occur before the end of March. A few legislators have suggested that the high command will step in only after the State's budgetary process is completed.

Missed call and threat

Former Deputy Chief Minister K.S. Eshwarappa *(pictured)* has requested an upgrade in his security cover from the existing X-category to Y-category. Reason? Just receiving a missed call from an international number, which he suspects could be a "threat." Mr. Eshwarappa, who was expelled from the BJP after contesting the 2024 Lok Sabha election from Shivamogga as an Independent candidate, is known for controversial statements.

Earlier, the State government had provided him Y-category security, which included an escort and protection at his residences in Shivamogga and Bengaluru. However, about three months ago, his security was downgraded to X-category, under which he is provided only a single gunman. After receiving the missed call on January 7, Mr. Eshwarappa urged the police to trace the caller and demanded the restoration of Y-category security.

Nagesh Prabhu
G.T. Sathish

Governor has neither rejected nor approved hate speech Bill: CM

The Hindu Bureau
MANGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah s ays the Governor will receive an explanation about the Bill if he seeks it

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said on Sunday that Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot has not returned the Karnataka Hate Speech and Hate Crimes (Prevention) Bill.

The Governor has neither rejected nor approved the Bill, he said.

Speaking to pressperson before leaving for Bengaluru after winding up his programmes scheduled in Mangaluru on Saturday evening, Mr. Siddaramaiah said that the Governor will receive an explanation about the Bill if he seeks one.

'Leaders jealous'

The Chief Minister said that removing banners displayed in connection with the inauguration of the statue of Maharshi Valmiki was the reason for the recent clashes between BJP and Congress workers in Ballari. "Why was there a need to remove the banners?" he asked.

Since BJP leaders G. Janardhana Reddy and B. Sriramulu are not enjoying political power now, they are exhibiting their jealousy in matters related to clashes, the Chief Minister said.

Mr. Siddaramaiah questioned the BJP's move to organise a padayatra from Ballari to Bengaluru on January 17 to condemn the clashes.

The Chief Minister said that the Congress organised a 320-km padayatra from Bengaluru to Ballari in August 2010, targeting the then ruling BJP over illegal mining and corruption. It was in protest against the Reddy brothers treating Ballari as their personal fiefdom and the then Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa not reining them in, he said.

He said that the Congress had launched the padayatra under the banner 'Ballari Chalo' after accepting the challenge thrown by Mr. Janardhana Reddy and Karunakara Reddy and their close associate Mr. Sriramulu in the Assembly, who had dared the party to step into their home district, and asked, "Why is the BJP organising a padayatra now?"

Mr. Siddaramaiah further denied that there is a tussle for power (for the Chief Minister's position) in the Congress. "It is all the creation of the media," he said.

DKS expresses confidence that Congress will take a decision on his future

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Amid the power struggle for the Chief Minister's post, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Sunday expressed confidence that the Congress would take a decision about his future.

"I do not come from a political family, yet I have grown to this level. I am confident that the party will take a decision on me going forward. I have taken many blows in politics," he said, speaking at Udyami Vokkaliga Expo 2026 here.

Mr. Shivakumar, who nurses ambition to succeed incumbent Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, is believed to be pushing for a change citing a two-and-a-half year power rotation deal, which has not been acknowledged by the Chief Minister's camp.

"You have all prayed for me when I was in jail. I am also aware that you are praying for me now and you are wishing me well. I believe prayers will never go to waste," the Deputy Chief Minister said.

D.K. Shivakumar

Stating that some people from his community (Vokkaliga) are criticising him, he said: "They are stabbing me from the front and from the back. My conscience knows how honest I was when (Union Minister) H.D. Kumaraswamy was the Chief Minister. Now, he accuses me of backstabbing him. I do not need any certificates. My conscience knows."

He said: "God does not give boon or curse. He only gives opportunities. We should make use of the opportunities when we get. Trust is the biggest thing in life and always maintain trust in transactions and business."

Drawing analogy from *The Mahabharat*, Mr. Shivakumar said: "I once told (former Chief Minister) B.S. Yediyurappa that the secret to success requires dharma of Dharmaraya, generosity of Karna, focus of Arjuna, strategy of Vidhura, strength of Bheema, and tactics of Krishna,"

Welcomes debate

Accepting the Opposition's challenge for a debate on the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), the Deputy Chief Minister felt that it was better if Mr. Kumaraswamy came for the debate. "Let it be the BJP State president or the Leader of Opposition in the Assembly or Mr. Kumaraswamy, I am ready for debate. It can be on any platform."

He said that the BJP government had given an award for NREGA work in Kanakapura, and the Centre had sent a team to investigate works.

'Congress opposing VB–G RAM G as govt. has no funds for it'

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly R. Ashok alleged that the Congress is opposing the Centre's rural employment guarantee scheme, Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G), because the Congress-led government in the State lacks the funds to contribute its share for the implementation of the programme.

Addressing a press conference in Mysuru on Sunday, Mr. Ashok said the Centre will contribute about ₹17,000 crore annually to the scheme, while the State will be required to contribute around ₹10,000 crore under the 60:40 funding ratio. "The Congress is upset with the scheme because the State government's treasury is empty and it does not have the resources to meet its share," he alleged.

As evidence of the State's financial distress, Mr. Ashok pointed to the government's failure to disburse the Gruha Lakshmi assistance of ₹2,000 per month for two months – February and March 2025. He accused the State government of "looting" ₹5,000 crore from beneficiaries by skipping the payments for those months.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

M SUBRAMANIAM (87), Retired Accounts Officer, The Hindu, Chennai passed away on 10.01.2026. Address: 92-93, SF6, Elegant Embassy, Rama Rao Layout, BSK 3rd Stage, Bengaluru- 560085. Contact: 98867 67920.

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

12th Anniversary

V.SRINIVASAN
Retired Deputy Secretary
Government of Tamil Nadu
Though you are no longer with us, your wisdom, love, kindness & teachings continue to guide us. we deeply miss you, you will forever remain in our hearts.
Wife, Daughters, Sons-in-Law, Sons, Daughters-in-Law, Grand Daughters & Grand Sons.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Sri. K.M Harish, Son of K.B Muni Reddy, Aged about 55 years, Residing at Patel Balappa Reddy Street, K.R Puram Village, Bangalroe-560 036, has cancelled the General Power of Attorney dated 17.04.2008, registered as Document No. MDP-4-00011/2008-09, in Book-4, stored in CD No. MDPD20, which is registered in the office of Senior Sub-registrar, Mahadevapura, Bangalore, in favour 1. Mr. R. Keshava Murthy, Son of V.P Raja Rao, Aged about 53 years, Office at # 1/1, K.G.V Layout, 2nd Cross, 4th Main RMV 2nd Stage, Bangalore-560094 and 2. Sri. N. Subba Rao, Son of Late Narayana Rao, Aged about 60 years, Residing at # 220, Survey No. 6/2, Hosakerehalli, BSK 3rd Stage, Bangalore-560 085, with respect to all that piece and parcel of agricultural land bearing in Survey No. 23/P14, {New Survey No. 23}, MR 43/2002-03, situated at Bidarahalli Village, Bidarahalli Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, Bangalore District, measuring 1 Acre and bounded on East by: Cheemasandra Boundary, West by: Remaining Portion of Survey No. 23/P14, North by; Property belongs to H.K Krishnappa and South by: Property belongs to Somashekar, Sy. No. 39/P7, by issuing notice.
Public are hereby informed/cautioned not to deal with said person with respect to property mentioned above.
Rajesh Gowda
Advocate
OFFICE ADDERESS # 2, 2ND MAIN ROAD, BEHIND LG SHOWROOM, SUBHASHNAGAR, OLD MADRAS ROAD, VIRGONAGAR POST, BANGALORE-49

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Sri. R. Somashekar, Son of Late N. Raja Reddy, Aged about 55 years, Residing at # 103/B, 1st Floor, 6th Main, 3rd Cross, Ganganagar, Bangalore-560 032, has cancelled the General Power of Attorney dated 28.05.2008, {registered on 02.06.2008}, registered as Document No. MDP-4-00037/2008-09, in Book-4, stored in CD No. MDPD22, which is registered in the office of Senior Sub-registrar, Mahadevapura, Bangalore, in favour Mr. Ashfak Ahmed, Son of Late Moulana Sab, Aged about 57 years, Office at # 50, D.T Court, 4th Floor, 9th 'A" Main, Indiranagar 1st Stage, Bangalore-560038, and Residing at # 786, National Complex, Udhayanagar, B. Narayanapura, Bangalore-560 016, with respect to all that piece and parcel of agricultural land bearing in Survey No. 39/P7, {New Survey No. 39}, MR 2/2003-04, situated at Hirandahalli Village, Bidarahalli Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, Bangalore District, measuring 0 Acre 30 Guntas and bounded on East by: Cheemasandra Boundary, West by: Remaining Porting of the same Property, North by; Private Property and South by: Private Property, by issuing notice.
Public are hereby informed/cautioned not to deal with said person with respect to property mentioned above.
Rajesh Gowda
Advocate
OFFICE ADDERESS # 2, 2ND MAIN ROAD, BEHIND LG SHOWROOM, SUBHASHNAGAR, OLD MADRAS ROAD, VIRGONAGAR POST, BANGALORE-49

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Only through KPP portal)

BWSSB invites Itemwar TENDERS from registered agencies for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (West), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore-09.

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number		Amount put to tender EMD (in Rs.)	Last date & time for Submission of Tender	Date & time for Opening of Tender
1	West-1	BWSSB/EEW-1/TO/PB/ 5124/2025-26, Dt: 09.01.2026 (Reserved for Category-IIA)	1	Rs. 25,81,474/-	19.01.2026 upto 4:00 pm	20.01.2026 after 4:30 pm
2				Rs. 25,000/-		
3			2	Rs. 24,87,298		
4		BWSSB/EEW-1/TO/PB/ 5124/2025-26, Dt: 09.01.2026		Rs. 25,000/-		
5			3	Rs. 26,96,442/-		
6				Rs. 53,950/-		
			4	Rs. 32,57,984/-		
				Rs. 65,200/-		
		BWSSB/EEW-1/TO/PB/ 5124/2025-26, Dt: 09.01.2026 (Reserved for Category-IIA)	5	Rs. 50,39,024/-		
				Rs. 50,400/-		
		BWSSB/EEW-1/TO/PB/ 5124/2025-26, Dt: 09.01.2026 (Reserved for SC Category)	6	Rs. 28,02,776/-		
				Rs. 28,100/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (West-1)

7	North-West-1	BWSSB/EE(NW-1)/PB/ 4318/2025-26, Dt: 09.01.2026 (Reserved for Category-IIA)	7	Rs. 26,47,639/-	19.01.2026 upto 5:00 pm	20.01.2026 after 5:15 pm
				Rs. 26,700/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (North West-1)

Office of the Chief Engineer (North), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore-09.

8	Central	BWSSB/EE(C)/PB/3256/ 2025-26, Dt: 08.01.2026	8	Rs. 16,46,852/-	20.01.2026 upto 5:00 pm	21.01.2026 after 5:30 pm
				Rs. 41,200/-		
9		BWSSB/EEC/PB/3258/ 2025-26, Dt: 08.01.2026	9	Rs. 78,46,196/-		
				Rs. 1,57,000/-		
10		BWSSB/EE(C)/PB/3260/ 2025-26, Dt: 08.01.2026	10	Rs. 23,22,459/-		
				Rs. 50,500/-		
11		BWSSB/EEC/PB/3262/ 2025-26, Dt: 08.01.2026	11	Rs. 13,84,128/-		
				Rs. 34,650/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (Central)

The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-Procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the undersigned office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/YC/4959/2025-26

Gandikota fest off to a colourful start in Kadapa

The Hindu Bureau
KADAPA

Visitors made a beeline for Gandikota, known as a geological wonder as well as a rich place with centuries of recorded history, as part of the Gandikota Festival-2026 that began on Sunday evening. The spot in Jammalamadugu constituency of Kadapa district became quite popular, with visitors from Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Telangana thronging it during the weekends.

Though the tourist footfall was more to witness the gorge, the historic fort, the ancient Madhavaraya temple, and the Jama Masjid also turned out to be a must-visit for the history and architecture lovers.

Amit Shah unveils BJP's three-point agenda for Kerala Assembly election

Union Home Minister says 'theft of gold artefacts' from Sabarimala temple will be a key focus of the campaign and protests will continue across all villages of the State; he accuses the LDF and UDF of being involved in match-fixing to share power

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The BJP kicked off its campaign in Kerala for the upcoming Assembly election with Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday announcing a three-point agenda of the party's campaign – developed Kerala, safe Kerala and protection of faith.

Signalling that the alleged theft of gold artefacts from the Sabarimala Ayyappa temple will be a key focus of the campaign, he said that the BJP would continue the protests in every village in Kerala until the State government hands over the investigation to a neutral agency.

Senior BJP leaders of Kerala welcome Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Thiruvananthapuram on Sunday. NIRMAL HARINDRAN

He was addressing a conference of the BJP's elected representatives, who won in various local bodies in Kerala in the recently held election. Mr. Shah told them that the victory in the local body election, especially in the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation, is the first step towards its aim of forming a government in the State.

"This change in Kerala is not limited to the urban areas alone. We have won 30 grama panchayats and came second in 79, while also winning the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation and two municipalities. Today the BJP has a Mayor in Thiruvananthapuram. Tomorrow we will have a BJP Chief Minister in Kerala... I want to tell Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan that it is time for him to go," he said.

Match-fixing

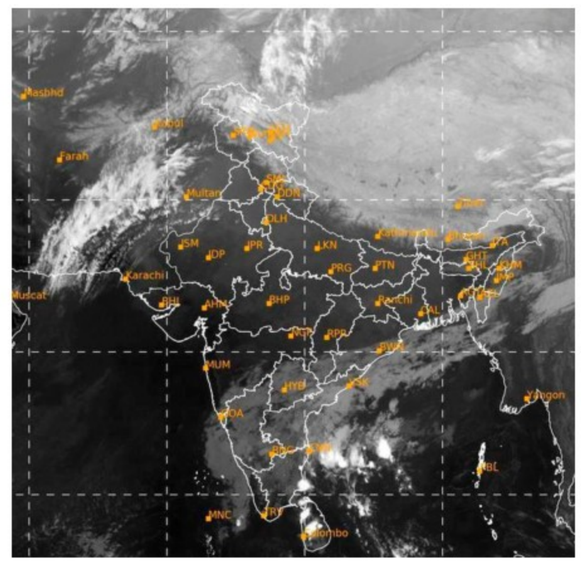
He accused the ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF) and the United Democratic Front (UDF) Opposition of being involved in match-fixing to share power between them, which has stunted the development of the State.

Mr. Shah said that neither the LDF nor the UDF can protect Kerala from the divisive agenda of the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, the Social Democratic Party of India and the Popular Front of India, as they are in alliance with them.

He said that the wrongs committed at Sabarimala are not just an issue concerning Kerala, but related to the beliefs of people across the country.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Heavy Rainfall very likely at isolated places over Tamil Nadu Puducherry & Karaikal. Cold wave conditions very likely at isolated places over Haryana, Chandigarh & Delhi, Punjab, Saurashtra & Kutch and Uttarakhand

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	26.2	15.2	Kozhikode	--	31.6	25.0
Ahmedabad	—	27.0	11.6	Kurnool	000.5	29.4	29.4
Aizawl	—	22.7	13.6	Lucknow	--	23.5	8.5
Allahabad	—	23.2	7.8	Madurai	007.0	28.5	21.7
Bengaluru	—	23.7	18.2	Mangaluru	000.1	32.8	22.9
Bhopal	—	26.4	8.0	Mumbai	--	30.6	19.5
Bhubaneswar	—	27.5	15.7	Mysuru	--	27.2	16.8
Chandigarh	—	18.0	5.0	New Delhi	--	19.3	2.9
Chennai	—	28.1	21.3	Patna	--	22.0	7.8
Coimbatore	3.4	31.1	20.0	Port Blair	--	29.2	24.7
Dehradun	—	23.0	6.0	Puducherry	003.0	26.3	20.7
Gangtok	—	15.3	5.7	Pune	--	29.9	14.1
Goa	—	23.0	12.4	Raipur	--	28.0	13.2
Guwahati	—	26.0	12.5	Ranchi	--	22.7	8.0
Hubballi	—	27.2	16.6	Shillong	--	16.0	4.0
Hyderabad	—	26.4	13.1	Shimla	--	16.2	3.5
Imphal	—	23.8	11.1	Srinagar	--	11.9	-5.2
Jaipur	—	21.9	9.2	Thiruvananthapuram	000.4	33.2	24.5
Kochi	—	31.2	25.4	Tiruchi	018.8	25.9	19.6
Kohima	—	16.4	9.4	Vijayawada	--	29.6	20.6
Kolkata	—	22.0	15.0	Visakhapatnam	--	27.3	21.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO 2	NO 2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.15	..24	41	... 104	...110	
Bengaluru	...5	..16	39	... 108	...123	
Chennai	...7	...5	54	 67	55	
Delhi	.30	..62	45	... 324	...182	
Hyderabad	.12	..35	19	 53	81	
Kolkata	.11	...9	31	... 191	...140	
Lucknow	...5	..40	78	... 220	...229	
Mumbai	.11	..65	34	... 143	...124	
Pune	.13	..85	68	... 230	...177	
Visakhapatnam	.19	..59	28	 62	...100	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Tonk, Rajasthan recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 308 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Madikeri, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 26

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Ahead of Union Budget, State seeks release of dues

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Ahead of the Union Budget, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has urged the Centre to release its dues and has referred to the economic conditions in the State owing to GST rate rationalization, increased social commitment, change in weather condition, and increasing urbanisation. The rate of growth of committed expenditure is faster than the State's revenue receipts, he has pointed out.

Claiming that the rate of GST collection had declined to 5% from 12% after

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah

The Chief Minister in a letter says the State estimated a revenue loss of ₹5,000 crore this year and ₹9,000 crore annually from the next financial year

rationalisation of GST rates, he said in a letter that the State estimated a revenue loss of ₹5,000 crore this year and ₹9,000 crore annually from the next financial year. While the Centre, to offset the losses, has imposed cess on pan masala and excise duty on tobacco products, States do not have any such revenue raising opportunities. The State has requested the Central revenue stream to States on the lines of GST compensation, and urged the Centre to share the cess on pan masala and excise duty on tobacco equally with States. He also sought ₹5,300 crore for the Upper Bhadra project that has been announced by the Centre earlier.

Urging the Centre to release its remaining share in Jal Jeevan Mission, he pointed out that the Centre has so far released only ₹11,786 crore as against the State's release of ₹24,598 crore. To ensure continuity of the scheme, the State's release is more than ₹13,004 crore.

Mr. Siddaramaiah said that the enactment of the VB-G RAM G Act by repealing the MGNREGA will reduce the man days with respect to employment and Karnataka may have to spend an additional ₹2,000 crore to continue providing 13 crore man days to ensure livelihood. "There is no scope to provide this additional sum in the budgetary allocation. Also, the new legislation has increased the State's share in the rural employment guarantee scheme. The scheme should be reviewed," he said.

Seeking an additional ₹796 crore under PM ASHA, he said that owing to low minimum support price, procurement has not been effective.

18 persons arrested for cyber fraud

P Sridhar
KHAMMAM

A major cyber fraud involving transactions worth ₹547 crore linked to fraudulent call centres based abroad has been busted with the arrest of 18 persons by the V M Banjar police in Khammam district on Sunday.

The main accused in the cyber fraud case, identified as Potru Manoj Kalyan, a native of Sathupalli town, has already been arrested and sent in remand, the police said.

Festive hues

Wide palette: A street vendor selling Rangoli powders ahead of Sankranti festival in Secunderabad on Sunday. G. RAMAKRISHNA

CGWB flags major contamination of groundwater in Andhra Pradesh

V. Raghavendra
VIJAYAWADA

The Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) has stated in its Annual Ground Water Quality Report, 2025 that Andhra Pradesh is one of the States facing widespread contamination of groundwater as per the BIS standards.

However, the report notes that the monsoon had shown some improvement in water quality, particularly in the areas affected by high electrical conductivity (EC) and fluoride.

"Elevated uranium concentrations exceeding 30 parts per billion (ppb) were detected sporadically in Andhra Pradesh and four other States," the report mentioned. High incidence of residual sodium carbonate beyond permissible limits was also recorded in Andhra Pradesh (26.87% of the samples analysed).

Health hazard: High incidence of residual sodium carbonate beyond permissible limits was recorded in Andhra Pradesh. V. RAJU

The groundwater quality alerts issued by the CGWB during June 2024--March 2025 highlighted the high incidence of nitrate, iron, fluoride, chromium, cobalt, manganese, nickel, zinc, arsenic, selenium, cadmium, lead, and uranium, with notable concerns in Andhra Pradesh and eight other States. Andhra Pradesh and some other States were found to be facing seawater intrusion in coastal aquifers, which was attributed to high levels of electrical conductivity.

Uranium hotspots

Sixteen villages in Sri Sathya Sai district, and three in Tirupati district were found to have uranium levels exceeding 30 ppb.

Five villages were identified as arsenic hotspots, where the concentration of the heavy metal exceeded 10 ppb. Fluoride contamination above 1.50 mg/l in areas, especially hard rock aquifers in Andhra Pradesh, where over-extraction enhances the mobilisation of fluoride-bearing minerals was one of the major findings.

Minister questions Opposition's silence on Karnataka's stand

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

Law Minister and CPI(M) leader P. Rajeeve on Sunday questioned the silence of the Congress leadership in Kerala towards the Karnataka government's objections to the Malayalam Language Bill, 2025.

Addressing presspersons here, the Minister said Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's criticism that the Bill does not protect the rights of linguistic minorities in Kerala, including those speaking Kannada, was out of place. He said the same criticism had cropped up against a law passed by the Kerala Assembly in 2015. "Mr. Siddaramaiah's Congress party was ruling Kerala then," Mr. Rajeeve said.

"Why does the Opposition in Kerala remain silent when the Karnataka [Congress] government is taking a stand against Kerala in the name of a non-existing clause? Creating an impression that the State has taken a stand against Karnataka, where a lot of Keralites live, will send out a wrong message. It has to be looked into with due seriousness," he said.

He drew parallels with the Malayalam Language Bill and the laws passed by the Karnataka government to drive his point home.

Indian Army officer from Bengaluru wins UN Secretary-General's Award 2025

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

An Indian Army officer from Bengaluru, Major Swathi Shantha Kumar, has won the UN Secretary-General's Award 2025 for her project Equal Partners, Lasting Peace.

Major Swathi is currently serving on an United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and her efforts are said to have significantly enhanced gender parity through the effective deployment and integration of the Indian Engagement team, thereby strengthening grassroot level engagement across the area of responsibility.

Under her initiative and

Major Swathi Shantha Kumar

Major Swathi Shantha Kumar is serving on an United Nations Mission in South Sudan

command, the team successfully conducted short- and long-distance patrols, integrated reverie patrols, and dynamic air patrols to far-flung counties of the host nation. These operations contributed substantially to creating a conducive and secure environment for more than 5,000 women, enabling meaningful participation and community confidence-building.

Major Swathi is an officer in the Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers (EME). Her father, R. Shantha Kumar, said that she did her schooling in Bengaluru and graduated from the New Horizon College of Engineering following which she was commissioned in the Indian Army.

"We are very proud that our daughter is serving the nation in uniform, but like any other parent I am worried about her as she has to serve in very harsh terrains and conditions. This award is a recognition for her hard work and discipline which makes me a very happy and proud father," Mr. Kumar said.

He added that Major Swathi has been in South Sudan for nearly 15 months and is expected to return to India early next month following which she will be posted in Secunderabad.

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres recently announced and honored the winners of the Secretary General's Award 2025.

In his address Mr. Guterres said that the Mission has further strengthened the gender-inclusive approach by the UNMISS.

This prestigious award recognises initiatives that advance gender parity and promote gender-responsive peacekeeping in alignment with the UN mandate.

The team was shortlisted from nominations received across all UN peacekeeping missions and UN agencies worldwide and emerged as the winner in the Gender Category, securing the highest number of votes among four finalists through a UN-wide voting process involving the UN personnel globally.

HC Bench will be established in Kurnool: A.P. Minister

The Hindu Bureau
KURNOOL

Andhra Pradesh Industries and Commerce Minister T. G. Bharath on Saturday said the NDA government was firmly committed to setting up a High Court Bench in Kurnool.

Participating in Sankranti celebrations organised by advocates in Kurnool, Mr. Bharath said he was holding discussions with Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and IT Minister N. Lokesh on the issue.

He also said a separate building would be constructed to house the Collectorate in the city.

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Inward turn

U.S. isolationism will fuel ethno-nationalism and racist hatred

The Donald Trump administration has sparked fresh concern on the global stage after it announced through a presidential memorandum that the U.S. would be withdrawing from the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, as well as 65 other international organisations and platforms, describing these as "contrary to the interests of the United States". Having already pulled out of the Paris climate agreement in his first term, Mr. Trump has now doubled down on plans to end all U.S. commitments to fight climate change by reversing his predecessor Joe Biden's actions. Washington has made plans for a quick exit mostly from UN-related agencies and advisory panels whose mandate relates to climate and renewable energy, gender equality, minority rights, rule of law and other areas that the Trump administration considers to be supporting diversity and 'woke' initiatives.

There is a serious question of real-world impact and damage to the existing order that is engendered by the U.S.'s impending plunge into pure isolationism. The administration's wholesale rejection, in early 2025, of decades of prior institutional commitments to and engagement with the World Health Organization has already led to setbacks to projects across the developing world that focus on maternal and infant mortality, disease surveillance, and halting the advance of tuberculosis, malaria and HIV/AIDS – all heavily dependent on external funding. In the climate change, human rights, labour standards and rule of law contexts, the key financing channels and impactful leadership momentum have historically been associated with U.S. institutions. The inevitable vacuum that the Trump White House's action will produce could actually cede that space to power players such as China and Russia, whose incentives to support a level playing field in coordinated international policies with a strong global footprint may not be aligned with the rest of the democratic world. The world has already been witness, under both Trump administrations, to the deleterious, destabilising consequences of Washington weaponising trade tariffs as means to achieving political goals. Now this small-frame view of national self-interest trumping good governance principles for the global commons may become the modus operandi for the remainder of the 21st century. The very idea of the nation state may face unprecedented challenges as inward orientation in policymaking will build an ever stronger base for rising ethno-nationalism and racist hatred of the "other". History has shown that this gives free rein to the worst qualities of human nature, with disastrous socio-political consequences.

Young love

POCSO Act must not allow parental pushback against adolescents

On January 9, the Supreme Court formally acknowledged an issue that legal scholars, child rights experts, and young adults in consensual relationships have long voiced: the menace of the POCSO Act being weaponised by families to punish young persons, but especially young men in romantic relationships with young women. The intervention validates years of alarm over how a statute designed to shield against predatory violence has been subverted into enforcing parental authority and traditional social boundaries. The systemic vulnerability lies within the Act's inflexible architecture. Scholars have argued that by establishing a rigid age of consent at 18 years and applying strict liability, in which the minor person's consent is rendered legally irrelevant, POCSO casts an indiscriminate net on those it deems to be offenders. Together with its stringent provisions and mandatory minimum sentences, which are intended to deter heinous offenders, the Act is easily manipulated by disapproving families. In cases of elopement crossing caste or religious lines, parents often file charges of kidnapping and sexual assault; this triggers the Act if the woman is under 18. As a result, in the current framework, a consensual adolescent relationship is hard to distinguish from coercive abuse, allowing families to use the state's punitive machinery against partners they consider unsuitable.

The Law Commission of India documented this gap in a 2023 report, in the course of advising against lowering the general age of consent from 18, citing dangers such as trafficking and child marriage. It also highlighted that treating two teenagers being close together with the severity reserved for predatory abuse is developmentally counterproductive, and recommended introducing "guided judicial discretion" in sentencing in cases involving adolescents aged 16-18. Likewise, the Court has ordered that its January 9 judgment be shared with the Law Secretary to endeavour to "curb this menace". However, the crisis is made worse by the absence of interventions that are not punitive. When young adults find their personal autonomy at odds with their families' expectations, they are often left isolated; the problem begins here. There is a lack of confidential counselling services for adolescents navigating relationships and emerging sexuality. Resources to mediate with families struggling with these intergenerational transitions are also virtually non-existent outside of traditional, often conservative, community structures. Until the state invests in bolstering these social services, prioritising education and counselling over invoking a response led by the police, and tweaking the Act to admit this recourse, the legal system will leave young couples vulnerable to familial wrath and prosecutorial overreach.

Faster is not fairer in POCSO case clearance numbers

Rahul Verma

is a sociologist and independent researcher who writes on education, labour and social inequality in India

New data and field reports show that thousands of children and their families still face long trials with little support

India crossed a much-publicised milestone in 2025 – fast track special courts cleared more child sexual offence cases than registered that year under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. They recorded a 109% disposal rate and closed 87,754 cases against the 80,320 registered.

Commentaries have hailed this as a turning point in the fight against child sexual abuse, by suggesting that courts have finally broken the backlog. However, new data and field reports point to a different tipping point where disposals rise but convictions fall and thousands of children remain stuck in long trials with little support.

The POCSO Act, passed in 2012, was designed as a special law because earlier provisions on rape and molestation under the Indian Penal Code and women's protection laws failed to recognise the particular nature of offences against children. POCSO promised child-friendly procedures, time-bound trials and a system that would see and hear children differently from adult survivors.

More courts but convictions fall short

India now runs 773 fast track special courts, 400 of them designated for POCSO cases. Fast track special courts started in October 2019 with ₹1,952 crore from the Nirbhaya Fund after orders by the Supreme Court of India. And these courts cleared 3,50,685 cases by September 2025. These courts handle 9.51 cases a month compared to 3.26 in regular courts. Even so, convictions and child support still fall short.

Convictions have actually gone down from 35% back in 2019 to 29% across the country by 2023. If we take the baseline figure of 35% in 2019, a 90% disposal rate in 2023 would mean that conviction should have risen to 45%. But it is 29% instead, which is 16 points lower and 36% short of what should be expected. The bottom line is that clearing cases faster means weaker convictions, not better justice. Fast track courts average just 19%. In a number of States, there are more accused walking free than being put behind bars. Tens of thousands of cases drag on for years.

Children who testify in POCSO cases have particular needs that go beyond quick hearings and formal compliance with the law. They require trained support persons, sensitive police and lawyers, and child welfare committees that can secure compensation and care while the trial is ongoing, not years later. When these protections remain on paper, higher disposal rates coexist with fragile convictions, thin reparations and children who leave the system more harmed than healed.

But the trend reveals a darker truth (*Table*):

Faster trials have not meant fairer verdicts. Investigations remain hurried, charge sheets stay incomplete and forensic reports are delayed, especially in overcrowded courts across Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra.

The enforcement gap also extends to support persons appointed under Section 39 of the POCSO Act, mandated by the Supreme Court in 2021 in all cases, and detailed in the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights 2024 guidelines. The support persons guide children through the long and complex justice-seeking process but as several States have still to empanel them, this results in cases collapsing pre-trial. Practical fixes exist. Right to Information (RTI)-based tracking of support persons, strict lab-report deadlines, case bundling for older files and quarterly conviction audits to focus attention on weak States. In Madhya Pradesh, special courts that sped up forensics and testimony have secured convictions where similar cases elsewhere failed.

PLVs, the missing first line of defence

The Supreme Court, in December 2025, directed para-legal volunteers (PLV) to be appointed at every police station for POCSO cases. The status report highlights gaps. Andhra Pradesh, for instance, has PLVs in 42 of 919 stations, while Tamil Nadu has none across 1,577. Without PLVs, families walk into police stations alone, scared, pressured and ignored. In the Unnao rape case (Uttar Pradesh), several news reports pointed to the initial reluctance by the police to register the case, as it sat on her first information report (FIR) for a few weeks while threatening her family to drop it. In Lalitpur (Uttar Pradesh) in 2022, a 13-year-old gang-rape survivor was assaulted again at the police station and the FIR was registered only after the intervention of a non-governmental organisation. The presence of a PLV could have stopped the threats, ensured the filing of the FIR the same day and protection of the evidence and the family.

There have been occasions when courts have acquitted the accused when they offered to marry the survivors once they turned adult. The higher judiciary has let off convicts citing 'happy marriage' despite Section 6 convictions against the perpetrator. Such rulings push vulnerable girls into life-long ties with their abusers.

Courts can order interim compensation at any stage, particularly where schooling or health is at risk, but most prefer to wait for final verdicts. By then the harm done to a child's education and family income is often irreversible. Many survivors receive the first instalment years after a judgment, which has seen High Courts pulling up legal aid authorities repeatedly for delays. The Vidhi Centre notes that in such instances, these payments lose their purpose.

Marginalised families borrow money for travel and lawyers. And they often spend more on survival than what state relief provides. Daily wage families lose work for hearings and mothers leave jobs in order to attend court. Speed without support leaves children more broken than justice served.

Disposals up, convictions down

The trend of faster case disposals raises questions about investigative capacity, forensic delays and support systems for children

Year-wise disposal and conviction data (2019–25)

Year	Disposal rate /Case resolution	Conviction rate
2019	**10.8%** of total pending trials completed	**34.9%** (National average, NCRB*)
2020	**5.0%** (Sharp decline due to COVID-19 lockdowns and court closures)	**39.6%** (Temporary spike reported during pandemic year)
2021	**71%** (67,734 cases disposed of out of 95,238 registered)	**32.2%** (Resumption of declining trend)
2022	**88%** (97,616 cases disposed of out of 1,11,357 registered)	**~30%** (National trend; variations reported across studies)
2023	**90%** (1,06,919 cases disposed of out of 1,19,016 registered)	**29%** (National average, NCRB)
2024	**87%** (1,06,982 cases disposed of out of 1,22,500 registered)	**19%** (Fast track special courts; ~81% acquittals)
2025	**109%** (87,754 cases disposed of against 80,320 registered)	Conviction outcomes uneven; State-wise variation remains high

*(Sources: National Judicial Data Grid via Lok Sabha Q.1018; *National Crime Records Bureau Crime in India 2019-2023)*

The year gone by, the Quad's year of interregnum

Harsh V. Pant

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It may still be too early to write the group off despite some challenges it faced last year

The year 2025 brought about unprecedented disruption in global geopolitics. The return of President Donald Trump to the White House has resulted in a significant churn in various strategic theatres across the world. The Indo-Pacific, arguably, has evolved as the most contested terrain marking the escalating competition between China and the United States. Notably, the Quad has remained a crucial facet of Washington's engagement in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Quad, a group of four like-minded countries – India, Australia, Japan, and the U.S. – has evolved as a crucial forum with a robust and multifaceted agenda of delivering global good in the region. The overarching objective of the group, however, remains anchored in establishing and sustaining a rules-based order in the region, marked by the notion of a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific.

A priority for Trump

Ever since the Quad's revival in 2017, the group has evolved with critical momentum. Importantly, Mr. Trump has been one of the key architects of the 2017 revival. Given Mr. Trump's emphasis on the 'America First' outlook, which later emerged as a core doctrine guiding Washington's foreign policy, there were early suspicions on the extent of the U.S.'s interest in continuing to further cooperate with countries in the Indo-Pacific under the rubric of the Quad.

However, the initial Foreign Minister-level summits of the group, hosted by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, signalled that the Quad is indeed a priority for President Trump. However, despite its best efforts, the group was unable to convene a leader-level summit in 2025, which was scheduled to be hosted by India. While this has led to speculation over whether the group has indeed withered, the remarkable importance of the Indo-Pacific region and the Quad's role as a force for global good in it, suggests that it may still be too early to write the group off; 2025 was, however, a year of interregnum for the Quad.

While the Quad was formed in 2004, in the aftermath of the tsunami in the Indian Ocean, the momentum of the group died following the steady withdrawal of member-countries in light of their own strategic compulsions. The group gained steam again in 2017, to set in motion a framework of cooperation among like-minded countries to establish a rules-based order, in the face of growing Chinese expansion in the region.

Since its revival, the Quad has hosted six leader-level summits between 2021-2024, along with several Foreign Minister-level summits. The sixth leader-level summit was held in 2024, in Wilmington, Delaware, U.S., hosted by the U.S., and which also marked the farewell of U.S. President Joe Biden.

That the Quad is a priority for the Trump administration was first signalled when Mr. Rubio hosted his counterparts of the group in Washington as his first major engagement, in January 2025 and again in July 2025.

Programmes held

The various initiatives of the group have remained active which include the Quad-at-Sea: Ship Observer Mission, which was operationalised for the first time in June 2025 to further Coast Guard-level cooperation. The Ports of the Future Partnership, an initiative to foster cooperation by way of promoting sustainable and resilient port infrastructure development across the Indo-Pacific, also witnessed its maiden meet in Mumbai, India, in October 2025. The 'Malabar' naval exercise, though not officially a part of the Quad's roster of initiatives but involving the four countries, was held in Guam to enhance maritime cooperation and interoperability among the navies of the four countries.

These suggest that the group has indeed shown critical resilience even as it faced turbulence because of Washington's shifts, resulting in the failure to convene a leader-level summit in over a year.

A leader-level summit is essential

However, for the group to continue with this momentum, it is vital for the Quad to ensure that a leader-level summit is held at the earliest. Since the last leader-level summit of the group, the administrations in two countries have changed.

In addition to Mr. Trump, Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, too, has not attended a Quad engagement since she assumed office in October 2025. For a group such as the Quad, with no institutional anchor, leader-level summits serve as a vital platform to foster bonhomie and achieve strategic convergence on common issues.

Historically, it is at the Quad leader-level summits that new initiatives have been conceptualised and announced. The U.S. Ambassador to India, Sergio Gor, has said before the U.S. Senate Foreign relations Committee in October 2025, that the group is continuing diplomatic efforts to ensure that a leader-level summit takes place in early 2026.

Thus, 2025 was indeed a year that challenged the growing synergy of the Quad. However, the fact that despite not holding a leader-level summit, it has continued to operationalise its initiatives demonstrates its remarkable resilience. The Quad, indeed, continues to remain a force for good.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Trump decoded

U.S. President Donald Trump is proving to be a 'mad cop', but he thinks himself to be a super cop of the world. His stance is way short of what a statesman should be and there are times when it is hard to believe that he is the President of the United States of America.

Govardhana Myneedu,
Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh

What U.S. President Donald Trump is doing is nothing but eccentric. He is perhaps flustered with the way the Ukraine war is progressing and upset that India has not reacted very greatly to his stream of statements about ending the conflict with Pakistan.

He is now threatening a host of other nations and wants to snatch Greenland. It is known to the world that he cannot take the upper hand in Russia's oil trading which is why he is intervening in Venezuela. Mr. Trump expects no resistance but he should never be allowed to be a big brother to the world. It is time leading nations unite to assure the world that there can be peace and global harmony.

Rajakumar Arulanandham,
Palayamkottai, Tamil Nadu

Mr. Trump's remarks on annexing Greenland and his claim that the U.S. would run Venezuela's oil business after the capture of Nicolás Maduro point to a troubling convergence of security rhetoric and resource politics. Greenland, an autonomous territory of a NATO ally, and Venezuela, a sovereign nation, are reduced to strategic assets in the name of blocking China or Russia. Such assertions undermine international law, erode respect for sovereignty, and strain alliances. Strategic competition cannot justify coercive approaches that risk global instability. Diplomacy and multilateral engagement remain the only credible safeguards.

Gopalaswamy J.,
Chennai

Iran protests

While the U.S. draws the line between the Iranian regime and the 'brave people of Iran', the Iranian government makes a distinction between 'peaceful protesters' and 'armed rioters'.

Fuelling internecine strife inside a country is an old trick that the U.S. is now trying in Iran to have its way — usually to effect regime change. In the first place, the U.S. imposed sanctions and exacerbated economic hardships that have driven people to hold the anti-government protests. One of the main grievances of the protesters against the government is financial distress.

The U.S. should first lift the long-standing sanctions and contribute to an improvement in the state of the economy if it really cares for the people of Iran. Change must happen with people's participation and not by an external power, however powerful it may be. In any case, it is imperative to avert a costly war.

G. David Milton,
Maruthancode, Tamil Nadu

The open display of the Shah-era flag marks a definitive turning point for the Ayatollah's regime. Facing a "meltdown" on two fronts, Tehran is besieged by internal civil unrest and an external "locked and loaded" U.S.-Israeli alliance. For Israel, this is a golden opportunity to eliminate a nemesis that patronises Hezbollah and the Houthis. Economically, the rial is no longer worth the paper it is printed on, shifting the protests from currency concerns to outright regime change. Following the "Venezuela model", the Trump administration appears poised to secure Iranian oil next.

R. Thomas Paul,
Bengaluru

ED in West Bengal

The Enforcement Directorate raids in West Bengal have led to a political stand-off between the Centre and the Trinamool Congress. The ED's 'crackdown', which is seen only in Opposition-ruled States, and at the time of elections, raises doubts about its integrity. Democracy will be protected only when government departments function independently with the country's welfare in mind.

Kshirasagara Balaji Rao,
Hyderabad

A piece of the peace Nobel

The shenanigans around the Nobel Peace prize are comical. A leader and the winner want a piece of the coveted peace prize to mark their places in history. Ironically, 'peace' in this melee remains elusive.

Subash Balakrishnan,
Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

Reimagining delimitation

Santosh Mehrotra

Former Professor of Economics, JNU, and currently Visiting Professor, Higher School of Economics, Moscow

The southern States have found that reducing population growth and improving health and education have led to serious disadvantages. The immediate fallout is that the Finance Commission (FC) has reduced allocations to the south as population size carries 50% weight in the redistribution of Union tax revenue among States. The longer-term implication is more serious: according to the current proposals, the proportion of seats will remain the same but the gap in the absolute number of seats will widen in the run up to the 2029 elections, impacting southern States. Delimitation will be decided by a Delimitation Commission (DC) before 2029.

Should the southern States be punished for having invested better in health and education that helped reduce population growth, by having their Lok Sabha seats reduced and thereby losing relative political and fiscal power? Most of the population increase since 1991 has happened in the northern States, such as Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh.

The possible solutions

The 84th Constitutional Amendment (2001) on delimitation has implications for representation, and the south needs to make its case urgently. The 84th Amendment Act extended the freeze on the number of seats from 2000 to 2026. It stated, "Keeping in view the progress of family planning programmes in different parts of the country, the government... decided..., as a motivational measure to enable State governments to pursue the agenda for population stabilisation," that Lok Sabha seats shall "remain unaltered till the first census to be taken after... 2026."

That is why the Census was delayed from 2021. The results are now expected by October 2028, after which the DC will be constituted and its recommendations announced, ahead of the 2029 Lok Sabha elections. Clearly, New Delhi always had this strategy of ensuring permanent power, by controlling the northern, more populous, States.

What are the solutions to prevent the unfair outcomes of delimitation to the south? Four alternative methods are conceivable. The first is to increase the total number of Lok Sabha seats, while retaining the current proportional distribution among States, using the 2011 Census as the basis. A redistribution based on the 2011 population, with no State losing seats, would result in a Lok Sabha of about 866 members. This might cause the least disruption. But it still does not solve the problem of States with higher population growth gaining more MPs.

The second is to raise the total number of Lok Sabha seats and also introduce equality among States in the Rajya Sabha (as is the case in the U.S. Senate), with each State having the same number of seats – for example, 10 seats per State – raising the total number of Rajya Sabha seats from 245 to 290. But the ruling party will oppose this as it would interfere with its goal of dominating the Lok Sabha.

The third is to raise the number of seats in Vidhan Sabhas to equalise representatives per 1,000 population for each State, leaving the Lok Sabha intact. In a large, federal country, this would improve representation in more populous States, particularly at the State level. But the ruling party will oppose this as well, since its eyes are on the Lok Sabha.

The last is to raise the total number of Lok Sabha seats, but change current ratios so that 60% of seats are allocated according to population size and 40% depend on efforts to reduce population growth. This would benefit States that have reduced their population growth (using a downward sliding scale). This could be a united negotiating position for the south.

This is comparable to the principle for representation of 27 member States to the European Parliament (called the Digressive Proportionality principle). It ensures fair representation in legislative bodies such as the EU Parliament by giving larger countries more seats but fewer per person and giving smaller countries fewer seats but more representation per person. It balances population size with state equality to prevent total domination by large nations. It is a compromise between pure population proportionality (one person, one vote) and equal representation for all states. It means a vote in a small country has more weight than in a large one.

The principle to be used

This will also rely on a principle used in India by the FCs. The FCs have had to deal with complaints of unfairness: the legitimate complaint by the southern States is that they contribute the most, but receive less over time from each FC. To address this, FCs use multiple criteria to allocate funds. The first is income distance (equity) (with 50% weight). This means that States with lower incomes receive higher transfers. The second is population size, which reflects the expenditure needs of the States. Here, the FCs have used either the 2011 Census population to reflect current needs or the 1971 population to reward population control efforts. So, if the FC, a constitutional body, uses a method to reward population control, why can't the DC? The third is demographic performance. This rewards States that have reduced fertility rates. The fourth is tax efforts. The FC rewards States that mobilise their own tax revenues and thus encourages responsible financial management. The southern States have no choice but to join hands around the Digressive Proportionality principle, and build consensus before the Centre constitutes the DC.

The southern States have no choice but to join hands around the Digressive Proportionality principle

Where cinema and politics meet

The nexus between the two will likely continue to spark controversies

STATE OF PLAY

Ramya Kannan
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In Tamil Nadu, cinema and politics are the twain that always meet. In a land where politicians have historically used cinema as a vehicle for their propaganda, and leading lights from cinema (including three chief ministers) have switched to politics, an intermingling of the two is not only unavoidable; it is to be expected. But even in a happy relationship, things can get rocky from time to time.

The latest episode in this shaky co-existence involves two films. Controversy erupted last week after the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) delayed approvals for the Pongal release of *Jana Nayagan*, featuring the popular star and emergent politician, Vijay; and *Parasakthi*, anchoring Sivakarthikeyan.

Jana Nayagan, reportedly Mr. Vijay's swansong, launched strategically a few months before the Assembly elections, is, going by the trailers, the launch vehicle for his political journey and party. His character's name in the film bears the initials TVK, the same as his political party Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam. The film was submitted to the CBFC in mid-December 2025 and reportedly passed initial scrutiny with suggested edits accepted, securing a U/A certification. But in a strange twist, the dissent of one member of the CBFC dragged it straight into the court halls. Some contentious portions sparked complaints that they hurt religious sentiments and misrepresented the armed forces.

The producer, KVN Productions, managed to get a favourable order at the Madras High

Court, which allowed a U/A 16+ certificate for the movie, but on appeal from the CBFC, a division bench granted an interim stay and listed the next hearing for January 21. This meant that the movie not only missed its initial pre-Pongal Friday release (January 9), but also the long Pongal weekend (January 15-18). The producers have reportedly approached the Supreme Court seeking an urgent listing of the case on January 12.

While Mr. Vijay has maintained radio silence on the issue, others have accused the Central government of weaponising the CBFC. Filmmakers condemned the Board for harrying them and making them run from pillar to post for certification. A representative of the TVK cried that there was "deliberate sabotage". Political representatives from the Tamil Nadu Congress condemned the CBFC for "attacking freedom of expression" and described the move as an instance of the growing politicisation of statutory institutions. Despite the rivalry between the DMK and the TVK, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK leader M.K. Stalin charged the BJP-led Central government with having weaponised the CBFC, as it had done with the Central Bureau of Investigation, the Directorate of Enforcement, and the Income Tax department. He made the statement a few hours after the CBFC cleared *Parasakthi*, ahead of its scheduled release on January 10, albeit with 25 cuts.

Notably, *Parasakthi* is being distributed by Red Giant Movies, founded by Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin. The film revolves around the anti-Hindi agitation in Tamil Nadu in the 1960s. Some cuts and modifications include references to Hindi, and phrases attributed to C.N. Annadurai. The anti-Hindu agitations still hold emotive appeal in Tamil Nadu, and increasingly outside the State as well.

In Tamil Nadu, films have repeatedly clashed with the CBFC and governments over 'sensitive themes'. Actor Kamal Haasan, who was put through the wringer in 2013 for his film *Vishwaroopam*, released a statement on January 10, calling for a "principled relook at the film certification process, with defined timelines, transparent evaluation, and written, reasoned justification for every suggested cut or edit." *Vishwaroopam* was banned for 15 days by the State government, following protests from Muslim groups objecting to its portrayal of terrorism, despite initial CBFC clearance. Mr. Vijay's 2017 film, *Mersal*, raised political hackles after it criticised GST and health care privatisation, again leading to tweaks by the CBFC. In 2025, Vetri Maaran's political drama, *Manushi*, on the plight of undertrial prisoners, went through a censorship battle. Finally, the Madras High Court reduced cuts and granted it a U/A certificate.

Given how cinema and politics stir passions in Tamil Nadu, the nexus will likely continue to spark controversies, with the free spirit of creation often having to accommodate the compulsions of politics, aided by the intercession of courts.

Active educational loan accounts in T.N. decline drastically

The number reduced from over 9 lakh in FY16 to about 3 lakh in FY25

DATA POINT

Sambavi Parthasarathy
Vignesh Radhakrishnan

Although students from Tamil Nadu remain the leading recipients of educational loans across India, there has been a significant decline in the number of active loans they hold. Given that this student group has been the most active borrower in the country in the last decade, this sharp downward trend warrants a closer analysis.

Chart 1A shows the number of active educational loan accounts in lakh across India between FY16 and FY25. The number decreased from 27.4 lakh accounts to about 20.1 lakh in the period. The fall can be mostly attributed to the fall in Tamil Nadu's numbers.

Chart 1B shows the number of active educational loan accounts in lakh in Tamil Nadu between FY16 and FY25. The number drastically reduced from 9.1 lakh accounts to 3.1 lakh in the period. It is important to note that these are active loan accounts and so they do not include those which were completely repaid or written off.

The decline shown in Chart 1A is primarily driven by the sharp contraction shown in Chart 2B. This is due to the fact that students from Tamil Nadu initially accounted for a disproportionately large share of education loans nationwide; consequently, even after a significant reduction, their borrowing volume remains high enough to dictate the overall trend.

Chart 1D shows Tamil Nadu's share in active educational loans over the years. Between FY16 and FY20, about 30-35% of India's educational loans were garnered by students in Tamil Nadu. Notably, in this period, only Kerala came close with students in the State forming about 12% of the outstanding educational loans in the period, followed by Maharashtra and Karnataka, each at about 8%. Even after the decline, Tamil Nadu's students formed 15% of India's outstanding education loans in FY25, the highest share for any State.

Notably, when borrowing by Tamil Nadu students is excluded from the national total, the number of active loan accounts in India remains remarkably stable. **Chart 1C** illustrates this trend between FY16 and FY25. It shows that, barring a temporary dip during the pandemic years, loan volumes across the rest of the country have held steady rather than declined.

Notably, the decline in active loan accounts in Tamil Nadu is not only because of the pandemic, with numbers trending downward consistently since FY16. This raises a critical question: is this sustained decline a result of sharply reduced accessibility within the State, or is it a market correction – a return to the 'expected volume' after an era of arguably inflated figures driven by overly liberal lending policies?

While the number of active loan accounts may have decreased, the amount of outstanding loans has increased. This essentially means that while the number of loan takers reduced, the loan taken per borrower has increased.

Chart 2A shows the amount of outstanding educational loans in crore between FY16 and FY25. The amount increased from around ₹55,000 crore to over ₹1,15,500 crore. Consequently, the loan disbursed per account increased from about ₹3 lakh to ₹6 lakh in the period as shown in 2B. Data for Charts 2A and 2B do not include Tamil Nadu's figure, given the rapid decline in loan takers.

A report published in December last year by a parliamentary standing committee argued that these figures collectively suggested a decline in accessibility of educational loans over time despite rising educational costs. It also recommended efforts to ensure access to educational loans to the maximum number of students in the country, and to accord priority to families Below Poverty Line.

Less accounts, more amounts

The data for the charts were sourced from a Right to Information reply filed by The Hindu with the Reserve Bank of India

Chart 1a: Number of active educational loan accounts across **India** between FY16 and FY25

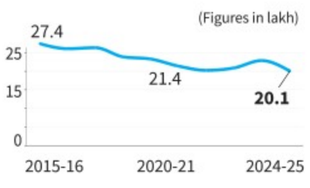


Chart 1b: Number of active educational loan accounts in **Tamil Nadu** between FY16 and FY25

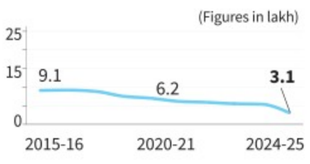


Chart 1c: Active educational loan accounts across India **excluding Tamil Nadu** between FY16 and FY25

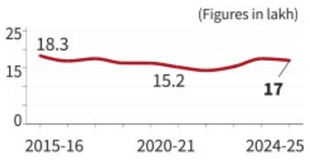


Chart 1d: Tamil Nadu's share in India's active educational loan accounts over the years

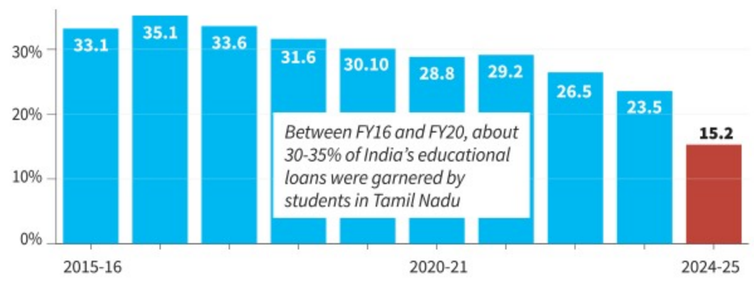


Chart 2a: Amount of outstanding educational loans between FY16 and FY25. The chart does not include Tamil Nadu's figure, given the rapid decline in loan takers

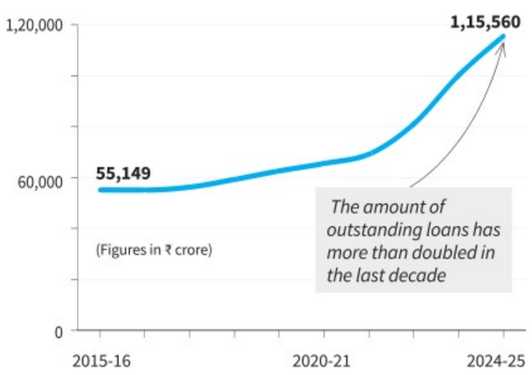
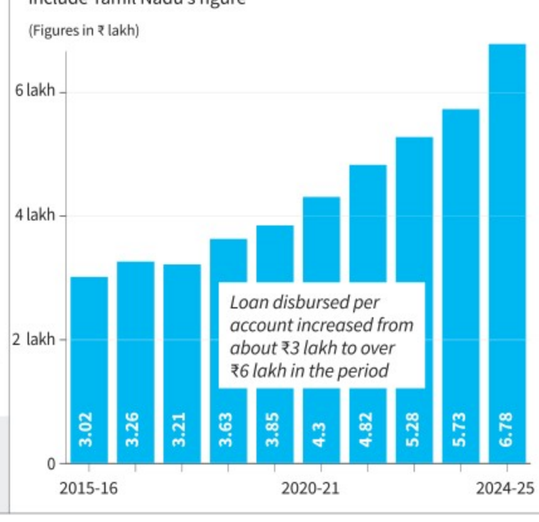


Chart 2b: Amount of outstanding educational loan per active loan account between FY16 and FY25. Data for the chart do not include Tamil Nadu's figure



■ The data for the charts are only based on the Priority sector return submitted by Scheduled Commercial Banks.
This does not include figures from regional rural banks

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 12, 1976

Drastic steps to check rise in population

Bombay, Jan. 11: A package of incentives and disincentives for tackling the alarming population problem is under the consideration of the Union Government, Dr. Karan Singh, Union Minister for Health and Family Planning, said here to-day.

Speaking at a function after giving away awards for best performance in respect of family planning achieved by various districts of Maharashtra, the Minister said India's population was rising menacingly and was proving to be a drain on the economy.

Drastic steps had to be taken to check this menace, even if it meant difficulties or displeasure to some, Dr. Karan Singh said.

He said the family planning programme would continue to be voluntary, but stressed that if the current steps failed to check the growth, then the Government might not hesitate to make the population control measures compulsory.

The population of the country, he said, was growing at the rate of one crore every year more than the population of Australia. By the turn of the century, it would cross the 100-crore mark, Dr. Karan Singh said.

Family planning programmes had to be propagated more in the country's villages, as 80 per cent of the population was rural-based. "The time is now ripe for every individual to be involved in this national programme," Dr. Karan Singh said.

He congratulated Maharashtra for being in the forefront of family planning programmes and noted with satisfaction its target of 5.1 lakh sterilisations which was more than the Union Government's expectations of 3.18 lakh sterilisations.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JANUARY 12, 1926

Important archaeological finds

Baghdad, Jan. 11: Prof. Langdon, conducting archaeological excavations, at Kish, announces important discoveries at the newly opened site, 16 miles north-east of Kish, the earliest Sumerian site yet found in ancient Accad. The discoveries include pictographical tablets older than anything found in Ur of the Chaldees, a large number of painted pots used by the earliest Sumerians belonging to the age of geometric pottery, and also a number of early Sumerian graves.

From Page One

Centre seeks source codes of smartphones

"Any legitimate concerns of the industry will be addressed with an open mind," IT Secretary S. Krishnan said, adding it was "premature to read more into it".

Tech companies have countered that the package of 83 security standards, which will include a requirement to alert the government to major software updates, lacks any global precedent and risks revealing proprietary details, according to four people familiar with the discussions and a *Reuters* review of confidential government and industry documents.

Indian government requirements have irked technology firms before. Last month the Centre revoked an order mandating a state-run cyber safety app, Sanchar Saathi, on phones amid concerns over surveillance.

The new proposal is part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's efforts to boost security of user data as online fraud and data breaches increase in the world's second-largest smartphone market, with nearly 750 million phones.

Manufacturers will also have to make software changes under the requirements to allow pre-installed apps to be uninstalled and to block apps from using cameras and microphones in the background to "avoid malicious usage".

Device makers will have to inform the National Centre for Communication Security about major software updates and security patches before releasing them to users, and the centre will have the right to test them.

Tech companies Apple, Samsung, Google, and Xiaomi, and the Manufacturers' Association for Information Technology (MAIT) did not respond to requests for comment. However, MAIT had asked the Ministry last week to drop the proposal, a source with direct knowledge said.

"This [source code review and analysis] is not possible... due to secrecy and privacy," MAIT had said in a confidential document drafted in response to the government proposal, and seen by *Reuters*. "Major countries in the EU, North America, Australia, and Africa do not mandate these requirements." MAIT's document says regular malware scanning significantly drains a phone's battery and seeking government approval for software updates is "impractical" as they need to be issued promptly.

Kerala MLA arrested on fresh charges of rape

The latest case against the MLA is based on a complaint filed by a non-resident Keralite woman who had befriended him on social media. In its FIR, the Crime Branch accused Mr. Mamkootathil of deceitfully winning the victim's trust by appearing concerned about her father's flagging health, her troubled marriage, and expressing an intent to marry her. The FIR stated that the MLA had disowned her gestating child and forced her to terminate the pregnancy.

The Crime Branch alleged that Mr. Mamkootathil financially exploited the woman to purchase branded clothing, an expensive watch, and to pay a substantial advance for his rental accommodation in a high-end apartment in Palakkad.

The FIR noted that Mr. Mamkootathil had persuaded the woman to contribute ₹5,000 to the Youth Congress's Wayanad Rehabilitation Fund Collection lottery and had promised her the top prize through "clever jugglery". The alleged crime had occurred when Mr. Mamkootathil was the Youth Congress State president in April 2024.

Speaker A.N. Shamsheer said his office would seek a legal opinion to disqualify Mr. Mamkootathil from the Assembly.

PM urges investors to seize opportunities

Mr. Modi said the true history of hatred, atrocity and terror had long been concealed, with the invasion portrayed merely as an attempt to loot the temple. He added that even after Independence, when Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel resolved to rebuild the Somnath temple, obstacles were placed in his path.

"Those involved in appeasement knelt before such people with extremist mindset, those forces are still present between us, who tried to obstruct the rebuilding of the Somnath temple. We need to remain alert, united and powerful to defeat such forces," the Prime Minister said. "Somnath's tale is the story of India; foreign invaders tried to destroy India many times, like this temple. The invaders thought that they had won by destroying the temple, but after 1,000 years, the flag of Somnath is still flying high," he said. This struggle of 1,000 years has no parallel in world history, he noted.

Earlier at the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference, the Prime Minister said that all regions of the State have their own strengths and Gujarat continues to remain the preferred destination for investors. The country's first semiconductor fabrication facility is getting ready in Gujarat's Dholera, he said.

In addition to infrastructure, Mr. Modi said that an industry-ready workforce is the need of the hour and added that Gujarat has the required skills to meet the demand. He also urged the investors to consider investing in the Saurashtra and Kutch region, which is emerging as a major centre for accelerating the Atmanirbhar Bharat campaign.

German Chancellor in Gujarat, activists call for Ariha's return

Officials say Ariha is meeting parents, Indian embassy in Germany regularly; no progress on government request that she be raised in Indian home; Centre says all aspects of the bilateral relationship will be discussed during Modi-Merz talks

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

A hoarding featuring German Chancellor Friedrich Merz and Prime Minister Narendra Modi ahead of their visit in Ahmedabad. AP

Accusing the German government of violating the human rights and cultural rights of five-year old Ariha Shah, who was seized from her parents on allegations of abuse four years ago, activists demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi take up the matter with German Chancellor Friedrich Merz when they meet on Monday.

Despite several pleas from New Delhi, the German government has not agreed to India's request that Ariha, an Indian citizen, be allowed to return to India and to be brought up in foster care here.

Mr. Merz will begin his two-day visit, his first trip to India and Asia as Chancellor, on Monday in Ahmedabad, where he will hold bilateral talks with Mr. Modi.

The case of Ariha has been raised by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with German counterparts a number of times, and Mr. Modi had discussed it with the previous Chancellor Olaf Scholz. After a meeting with German Foreign Minister Wadephul in September 2025, Mr. Jaishankar had said it was "essential" that Ariha "grows up in Indian surroundings".

"It is imperative that the Government of India raises Ariha's case at the highest level to ensure her immediate repatriation to India," Yatin Shah, from the Save Ariha Team, a group of social workers and Shah family associates, said in a statement about Ariha's situation after she was taken into German foster care in September 2021.

'UN norms violated'

The group repeated demands by Ariha's parents, Gujarati-Jain couple Dhara and Bhavesh Shah, that the child be taught Gujarati or Hindi and learn about the Jain religion she was born to, adding that depriving a child of her "mother tongue, religion, and cultural exposure directly violates the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child [UNCRC]", to which both India and Germany are signatories.

Asked whether the issue would be taken up during Modi-Merz talks, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on Friday that "all aspects of the bilateral relationship will be discussed".

The Ministry and German Embassy officials countered the allegations that Ariha had been kept away from learning about her Indian culture, pointing out that Indian Embassy officials were given regular consular access to the girl.

"We are continuously working on cultural immersion measures for Ariha, including language classes," said a German embassy spokesperson, adding that English classes had begun, while the government was in talks with the Indian embassy about teaching her Hindi.

At present, Ms. Dhara and Mr. Bhavesh are allowed to visit their daughter twice a month, and thus far the Indian embassy has been granted five consular access visits. The last such visit was on September 15, shortly after Mr. Jaishankar's meeting in Berlin, government sources said, adding that Indian books and materials had been shared with Ariha.

According to the Save Ariha team, German Youth Services Jugendamt, who had originally accused the Shahs of grievous abuse but subsequently dropped criminal charges, have already billed Ariha's parents about ₹22 lakh for foster care and another ₹16 lakh for administrative and legal costs.

Arbitration Council of India yet to be constituted

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

As many as six years after the law was amended, the Union government is yet to constitute the Arbitration Council of India to regulate and promote institutional arbitration in the country.

Senior officials in the Union Law Ministry said it took years for corporates and public sector undertakings to shun *ad-hoc* arbitration and go for institutional arbitration to settle commercial disputes.

The proposed council is mandated to regulate institutional arbitration. "But when institutional arbitration has not taken shape in India, who would the Arbitration Council regulate? Now it has taken shape, and within this year, the proposed council will be set up," an official said.

Former Union Law Secretary P.K. Malhotra disagreed.

"The provision for an institutional mechanism by the Arbitration Council of India was made by amending the Arbitration Act in 2019... The proposed council has not yet been constituted. It is adversely affecting efforts for making India a hub of international arbitration," he said.

Bhairav Battalions to debut in Army Day parade in Jaipur on January 15

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

Bhairav Battalions are high-speed, offensive units capable of executing Special Forces' tasks at multiple levels. ANI VIDEO GRAB

The Army's newly raised modern warfare force, the Bhairav Battalions, will participate in the Army Day parade for the first time in Jaipur on January 15.

A senior Army officer confirmed that two Bhairav Battalions will participate in this year's parade—Southern Command's 2 Bhairav Battalion, known as the 'Desert Falcons', and South Western Command's 4 Bhairav Battalion. The war cry of the 2 Bhairav Battalion is *Raja Ramchandra ki Jai*.

On Sunday, the Army shared a video on its official X handle, showcasing the Bhairav battalions. Highlighting the Army's focus on unmanned warfare, the officer said, "We are creating a pool of over one lakh drone operatives across the force. These operatives are capable of handling drones and employing them in real operations to target bases and formations inside the enemy territory."

Raised by Army headquarters by drawing lessons from global conflicts as well as India's own operational experience, including the recent Operation Sindoor, the Bhairav Battalions are designed as high-speed, offensive units capable of executing Special Forces' tasks at multiple levels, depending on operational requirements, the officer added.

So far, the Army has raised 15 Bhairav Battalions, deployed across formations along borders, the officers said, adding plans are under way to raise about 25 such battalions in total in the near future.

Bridging the gap

The battalions are intended to bridge the gap between Para Special Forces and regular infantry units, enabling them to conduct special operations from tactical to operational depth.

"Modern warfare is changing at a very rapid pace. Today's conflicts are hybrid in nature, and forces must be fully equipped with modern technology to meet these challenges," the officer added. "The Bhairav Battalions are part of force restructuring and have been raised in line with new technologies, evolving thought processes, and emerging operational requirements," the officer said.

As part of a broader transformation, the Army has also created Rudra Brigades—integrated all-arms formations combining infantry, mechanised units, tanks, artillery, special forces, unmanned aerial systems, along with dedicated logistics and combat-support elements.

Additionally, the Artillery, Mechanised Infantry and Armoured Corps are being equipped with advanced capabilities, including drones and modern battlefield systems, to enhance operational effectiveness in future conflicts.

'X accepts mistake, promises compliance with Indian laws'

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Around 3,500 pieces of content have been blocked, and over 600 accounts deleted.

Microblogging site X has accepted its mistake and promised it will comply with Indian laws after the IT Ministry warned the Elon Musk-led social media platform on the Grok AI obscene content issue, government sources said on Sunday.

Around 3,500 pieces of content have been blocked, and over 600 accounts deleted, according to sources.

X has accepted its mistake, and said it would comply with Indian laws, the sources said, adding that in future, the platform would not allow obscene imagery.

Earlier, the government had asked X for details, including specific action taken on obscene content linked to Grok AI, and measures to prevent a repeat in future, after it found the response submitted by the platform to be inadequate.

In its response after the first notice was issued to it, X had outlined the strict content takedown policies it abides by when it comes to misleading posts and those related to non-consensual sexualised images.

While the reply was long and detailed, it had "missed" key information, including takedown details, specific action that was taken on the Grok AI obscene content issue, and measures to prevent it in future.

2 injured in Odisha aircraft crash-landing airlifted to Mumbai

Press Trust of India
BHUBANESWAR

Two passengers injured in the emergency crash-landing of a small aircraft near Rourkela in Odisha were airlifted to Mumbai for treatment, while another injured person is on ventilator support, a senior official said on Sunday.

At least six people, including two pilots, were injured when a nine-seater aircraft of India One made an emergency crash-landing near Rourkela in Odisha on Saturday afternoon.

Speaking to pressperson at the accident spot, the Odisha's government's Commerce and Transport Department Principal Secretary Usha Padhee said that two injured passengers (a couple), on their personal wish, were airlifted to a hospital in Mumbai this morning.

"The two passengers were under treatment in a private hospital in Rourkela. They wanted to go to the Mumbai hospital for further treatment. After getting clearance from the Rourkela hospital, they left for Mumbai," she said.

Meanwhile, a three-member team of the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) on Sunday started its probe into the crash-landing incident.

Selfie, 'penny-drop' mandated as KYC for crypto customers in India

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

All crypto exchanges must register with FIU as reporting entities.

Selfie with liveness detection, recording of geographical coordinates, and verification of bank account by the 'penny-drop' method are among the mandatory new measures listed by India's financial intelligence agency under the anti-money laundering and terrorist financing KYC protocols for cryptocurrency exchanges while onboarding users.

The directives also discourage Initial Coin Offerings and Initial Token Offerings , equivalent to IPOs in stock markets, by the exchanges. They say that tumblers, mixers, and anonymity-enhancing tokens-linked transactions shall "not" be facilitated.

PTI has reviewed the updated set of guidelines brought out by the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), a body that functions under the Union Finance Ministry, on January 8 as part of the 'anti-money laundering (AML) and combating financing of terror (CFT) guidelines for reporting entities providing services related to virtual digital assets (cryptocurrency).' The guidelines have been updated about three years after they were first published in March 2023.

The FIU is the single-point regulator for cryptocurrency exchanges operating in India under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The fresh guidelines mean that all crypto exchanges must register with FIU as reporting entities and submit regular reports on suspicious transactions and maintain records of their clients (customers) to identify and combat money laundering, terrorist financing and proliferation financing risks associated with crypto assets, which India has not identified as a legal tender but taxes under the Income-Tax law.

The guidelines stipulate that exchanges should "mandatorily" obtain the Permanent Account Number (PAN), selfie with liveness detection, and latitude and longitude coordinates of the onboarding location with date and timestamp, along with the IP (Internet Protocol) address of the customer as part of the 'client due diligence' measures.

ED moves SC over Mamata's action, seeks a CBI probe

Agency says it faced 'gross obstruction of justice' as vital evidence was removed due to illegal State intervention; the searches are evidence-based, and not linked to any party or election, it adds

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has approached the Supreme Court and sought a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into the alleged obstruction of its searches at the offices of the political consultancy firm I-PAC and its co-founder Pratik Jain in Kolkata by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, State officials and other individuals.

BJP workers stage a protest in Kolkata on Sunday against Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's conduct during the ED searches. PTI

'Scenes of showdown'

The anti-money laundering agency has argued that the intervention of the Chief Minister has derailed a lawful investigation into coal smuggling.

Vital evidence, both physical and electronic, connected to the probe was removed and the searches were bulldozed, amounting to a "gross obstruction of justice". The sites of the searches descended into scenes of a "showdown" through the illegal intervention of the State machinery itself.

The State of West Bengal has already filed a caveat in the Supreme Court to ensure that no *ex parte* orders, possibly granting relief to the ED, are passed without hearing it first.

The ED had also moved the Calcutta High Court seeking action against Ms. Banerjee and officials under the criminal law for disrupting the searches conducted in accordance with the procedure established by the law.

A hearing held before a two-judge Bench of the High Court on Saturday was adjourned to January 14. The State has also filed counter-petitions, challenging the ED's version.

The Trinamool Congress had consulted with the firm over the past few years and I-PAC had helped the party shape its electoral and political strategy in the 2021 Assembly election and subsequent elections in West Bengal.

The ED said that the search was connected to a probe into a coal smuggling syndicate and entities linked to *hawala* money, and was conducted strictly in accordance with established legal safeguards.

"It is clarified that the search is evidence-based and is not targeted at any political establishment. No party office has been searched. The search is not linked to any elections, and is part of a regular crackdown on money laundering," the agency had said in a statement.

Bengal police have become 'a weapon' to openly assist Mamata Banerjee, says BJP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Sunday alleged that the police in West Bengal had become "a weapon to openly assist" Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in her "illegal and unconstitutional activities". Even the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Assembly was not safe in the State, the party said.

At a press conference, BJP MP Ravi Shankar Prasad condemned the attack on the convoy of his party colleague and LoP Suvendu Adhikari at Chandrakona in Paschim Medinipur on Saturday evening. "This attack took place in the presence of police, but no first information report was registered... when we had gone to Sandeshkhali as part of an MP delegation, if my security and the Central Reserve Police Force had not been there, we would not have been able to enter," he said.

Ravi Shankar Prasad

The BJP leader questioned Ms. Banerjee's explanation for visiting the I-PAC office when searches by the Enforcement Directorate were under way, adding that it was the private property of a consultancy firm. "And secondly, what was the compulsion that you [Ms. Banerjee] snatched a green file and ran away? And moreover, the Police Commissioner was also with her [Ms. Banerjee], the DGP was also there," Mr. Prasad alleged.

"Our clear allegation is that Mamata Banerjee's police have now become a weapon to openly assist her in her unconstitutional activities," Mr. Prasad said.

"This is a *quid pro quo*. If you get caught in the Narada-Sarada scam, I will sit on a dharna (protest) for you. I will arrest the CBI officials. And then, when I do something wrong, you will stand with me...," he said.

"We will also slowly reveal things. But overall, so far, no such explanation has been given by Mamata Banerjee as to what forced her to rush to the flat on the 11th floor, and she herself came out with a whole file, while the police took the rest," Mr. Prasad said, in an apparent reference to reports linking the incident to the election in Goa.

Ms. Banerjee had accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah of working against the Constitution, but under which legal provision did she go to a privately owned property and "take away the files", Mr. Prasad said.

Congress alleges 'brutal' lathi-charge on NSUI

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Sunday alleged that the "Yogi-Modi trouble-engine" government in Uttar Pradesh ordered the police to "brutally lathi-charge" National Students' Union of India (NSUI) protesters taking out a peaceful march in Varanasi as part of the party's nationwide 'MGNREGA *Bachao Sangram*'.

The Congress general secretary in charge of communications, Jairam Ramesh, shared a video clip in which police could be seen purportedly pushing and using force against the protesters. "It was a completely peaceful and democratic demonstration, but the Yogi-Modi 'trouble-engine' government was so afraid of being questioned that it ordered the police to brutally lathi-charge the protesters," he alleged.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi also lashed out at the BJP over the incident.

India's air pollution a structural crisis: Cong.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Citing the latest analysis by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA), which said that nearly 44% of Indian cities suffer from chronic air pollution, the Congress on Sunday said that the report confirmed what it called "India's worst-kept secret"– that air quality is a nationwide "structural crisis" and that the government's response has been exceedingly "ineffective and inadequate".

In a statement, the Congress flagged the government's alleged failure to hold a debate on pollution in Parliament.

The independent think tank's report found that 1,787 out of 4,041 statutory towns assessed have chronic air pollution, with annual PM2.5 levels consistently exceeding the national standard over a five-year period (2019-2024, excluding 2020).

The report highlighted that despite the scale of the problem (1,787 towns), only 130 cities are covered under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP). Of these, 28 still lack continuous ambient air quality monitoring stations. Among the 102 cities with monitoring infrastructure, 100 reported PM10 levels of 80% or higher. In totality, the NCAP currently addresses only 4% of India's chronically polluted cities.

The statement, issued by Congress general secretary (communications) Jairam Ramesh, dubbed the NCAP as "Notional Clear Air Programme." The party has called for a "thorough overhaul and reform" of the policy.

'NCAP funding'

"The government must drastically increase the funds under the NCAP. The current budget, inclusive of NCAP funding and the 15th Finance Commission's grants, is about ₹10,500 crores, spread across 131 cities. Our cities need at least 10-20 times more funding," Mr. Ramesh said. "The NCAP must adopt measurement of PM 2.5 levels as the yardstick for performance. It must reorient its focus on key sources of emissions," he added.

Trinamool's campaign song for Assembly election plays up Bengali identity

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Amid its ongoing stand-off with the Enforcement Directorate (ED), the Trinamool Congress has launched its campaign song, with a focus on Bengali identity and language, for the Assembly election in West Bengal.

The three-minute, 13-second song titled *"Jotoi koro hamla, abar jitbe Bangla* (Attack as much you can, Bengal will win again) was made public on Saturday.

The ruling party in West Bengal has woven Bengali *asmita* (identity and language) into its campaign song. The song highlights party chairperson and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, and her nephew and the party's general secretary, Abhishek Banerjee, whereas Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah are shown as the Trinamool's political adversities.

Powering up: Abhishek Banerjee addresses a public meeting in Malda on January 8, ahead of the Assembly election. PTI

The campaign song goes on to accuse the BJP of dividing people on communal lines, and of disrespecting icons, including Rabindranath Tagore, Subhas Chandra Bose, and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar.

"Our campaign song is finally here, ready to ignite every corner of Bengal!...," the Trinamool Congress posted on its official social media handles while launching the song.

Days before the launch of the song, Mr. Abhishek Banerjee launched the party's campaign for the 2026 Assembly election with the theme '*Abar jitbe Bangla*' (Bengal will win again).

With its campaign and song, the Trinamool is seeking a fourth term in the State.

BJP pursues divisive politics, seeks to 'isolate' Mumbai: Thackerays at rally

Snehal Mutha
MUMBAI

Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray and Maharashtra Navnirman Sena leader Raj Thackeray on Sunday launched a sharp attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party, accusing it of pursuing divisive politics and systematically "isolating" Mumbai's Marathi *Manoos*. They also accused the national party of facilitating land grab to benefit the Adani Group and conspiring to "separate Mumbai from Maharashtra and bring it closer to Gujarat".

Mr. Raj Thackeray presented maps of India and Maharashtra allegedly showing the expansion of Adani Group projects between 2014 and 2025, and asked how one industrialist was being favoured in the country and the State. "The prices of cement have increased rapidly. Are we even paying attention to that? We are stuck in Hindu-Marathi," said Mr. Raj Thackeray.

Uddhav Thackeray and Raj Thackeray addressing the gathering during a joint rally, in Mumbai, on Friday. PTI

Mr. Uddhav Thackeray alleged the use of cement manufactured by the Adani Group for projects in the city had contributed to pollution, while the BJP built the narrative of "Hindu-Muslims, Hindu-Marathi Mayor". He also slammed the BJP for disturbing the social fabric of Maharashtra and wanting to control the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) to execute their plan of looting Mumbai.

The Thackeray cousins were speaking ahead of the municipal corporation elections in various cities, including Mumbai, scheduled on January 15. The BMC elections are considered crucial for the Thackeray cousins, and for the first time in two decades, they have forged an alliance.

During the public meeting, Mr. Uddhav Thackeray alleged that the BJP didn't want the *Hindutavadi* Sena as their ally because the party won't let it capture and control the BMC, adding the BJP is no more a "country-first party, but a corruption-first, rape-first party".

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LITERARY TRIVIA CHALLENGE

1. Which young diarist wrote The Diary of a Young Girl, documenting her life in hiding during World War II?
2. Which novel by Ian Fleming, published in 1953, was the first book to feature James Bond?
3. Which city has introduced Tamil Nadu's first curated book vending machines at two railway stations, dispensing stories instead of snacks?

*T&C apply.

Scan QR code or visit https://newsth.live/LFLQUIZ to take the quiz. Top 3 winners* every day win gift vouchers.

Answer to yesterday's quiz:
1. Kalki Krishnamurthy | 2. If— | 3. Steve Waugh

Yesterday's Winners:
1. Madhu Naidu, Hyderabad | 2. Amrit Panda, Bhubaneswar
3. Gopal Hari, Mavelikara

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NOTICE INVITING QUOTATION
RFQ No: APMDC/HO/P&C/Science Lab Equipment
APMDC-DAV Model School at Suliyari/2025-26 Dt. 12.01.2026

APMDC invites Quotations from reputed Agencies for "Supply Of Laboratory Setup Accessories To APMDC DAV Model School At Suliyari Coal Project, Madhya Pradesh". For more information on the eligibility criteria, tender fees, timelines and other details, please visit APMDC website **(www.apmdc.ap.gov.in).** The Tender document is available for downloading from APMDC website **from 12.01.2026** and the last date for submission of quotation is **02.02.2026.**

Place: Vijayawada
Date: 12.01.2026
DIPR 4742PP/CL, Dt.09/01/2026

Sd/-Managing Director
The A.P. Mineral Development Corporation Limited

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The APTRANSCO invites Expression of Interest for **"carrying out SAMAST project in Andhra Pradesh"** within 4 weeks from the date of this publication. Please visit APTransco website **www.aptransco.gov.in** for further details.
RO No: GMCC/APTRANSCO/14/26

Sd/- Chief Engineer/SLDC

MAHATRANSCO Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Co. Ltd.

**INVITATION FOR BID (IFB)
(LOCAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING)
SRM e-Tender No. T-2557/MSETCL/CO/ Projects/Pre-Tender (RFx No. 6000001461) (3rd Call)**

MSETCL invites offers by SRM e-tendering in TWO bid system (Techno-Commercial Bid and Price Bid) from the eligible registered bidders for the following work as detailed below.

"Establishment of 220/22 kV substation at Talegaon MIDC Phase II, Tal.- Maval Dist.- Pune along with associated EHV Transmission Lines on turnkey basis under Pune zone, MSETCL Maharashtra."

Interested bidders may obtain further information available on the website. **https://srmetender.mahatransco.in**

The date of downloading of Bid documents available on the website is from **08.01.2026.**

Sd/- **Chief Engineer (Projects), MSETCL**

MAHATRANSCO Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Co. Ltd.

**INVITATION FOR BID (IFB)
(LOCAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING)
SRM e-Tender No. T-2560/MSETCL/CO/ Projects/Pre-Tender (RFx No.6000001477) (3rd Call)**

MSETCL invites offers by SRM e-tendering in TWO bid system (Techno-Commercial Bid and Price Bid) from the eligible registered bidders for the following work as detailed below.

"Establishment of 220/132 kV Narsi S/S along with construction of 220 KV DC Krishnoor Narsi Line (Line length: 19.39 km) and construction of 132 kV LILO on Waghala Dhuppa line from 220 kV Narsi s/s (Line Length-1 km) under Ch. Sambhajinagar zone, MSETCL, Maharashtra."

Interested bidders may obtain further information available on the website. **https://srmetender.mahatransco.in**

The date of downloading of Bid documents available on the website is from **08.01.2026.**

Sd/-
Chief Engineer (Projects), MSETCL

Name and Address of the entity seeking Proposal:
Bangalore International Airport Limited
BIAL Project Office, Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru Bangalore 560 300,
Web: www.bengaluruairport.com

Kempegowda INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BENGALURU

NOTICE TO EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

S.No.	Tender Title	Short description of Scope Work
1	Construction of Multilevel Car Parking, Food Court and Associated Infrastructure facilities	The successful Tenderer will bear full and comprehensive responsibility for the end-to-end execution of the Project. This includes, but is not limited to, preparation of shop / GA drawings, Excavation, Civil, Structural, Architectural, Envelope, Landscape and Softscape works, Signage, Structural work for Advertisement, all Related Works' coordination, Landside Works and obtaining all requisite statutory approvals and clearances from relevant authorities. The scope of Works shall also include integration of services and utilities of the proposed MLCP, Airport Food Court and Associated Works with the existing services. The successful Tenderer will be responsible for ensuring seamless coordination with BIAL, Design Consultants, the Project Management Consultant (PMC), Related works contractors, statutory bodies/relevant government and regulatory authorities, and all other stakeholders for timely and successful completion of the Works. Building Configuration: · Ground Floor: Food Court · First to Sixth Floor: Car Park (on Sixth Floor Stack Parking) · Terrace: Services & Equipment Plot Area Site: 3817 Sqm Approximately Built up Area: 25,880 Sqm Approximately (G+6 Floors)

Pre Qualification Criteria & other Information are available on BIAL website www.bengaluruairport.com under Tenders section.
The submission due date & Time shall be 27, January 2026 at IST 17:00 Hours.
Applicants who are interested shall express their interest through E–Mail: projecttenders@bialairport.com;
To submit EOI, register and login to BIAL E-Tendering website (https://www.bialtenders.com;) event ID: 3625
Note: Any Further Addendums to this EOI shall be made available in BIAL website.
Name and address of the entity seeking EOI:
Sr. Vice President – Procurement & Contracts
Bangalore International Airport Ltd.,
BIAL Project Office,
Kempegowda International Airport,
Devanahalli, Bengaluru - 560 300
Email: projecttenders@bialairport.com;
Phone No: 080 – 6678 2431
www.bengaluruairport.com

INBRIEF

RSS evolving with time, taking new forms: Mohan Bhagwat

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) is not changing but "gradually evolving" and "simply unfolding" with time, Mohan Bhagwat said on Sunday. The RSS chief was addressing an event held at the organisation's office in New Delhi to launch the song album of the upcoming film *Shatak*, which chronicles the 100-year journey of the RSS. Singer Sukhwinder Singh, director Ashish Mall, co-producer Ashish Tiwari, and RSS functionary Bhaiyaji Joshi were present on the occasion. "The organisation (RSS) is celebrating its centenary. But as the organisation evolves and takes on new forms, people perceive it as changing. However, it's not actually changing; it's simply unfolding gradually," Mr. Bhagwat said in his address. PTI

Congress leader Sonia Gandhi discharged from hospital

Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi was discharged from hospital at 5 p.m. on Sunday, with advice to continue further treatment at her residence. The senior Congress leader was admitted to Sir Gangaram Hospital in Delhi on the evening of January 5 with exacerbation of bronchial asthma due to chest infection. She has responded well to treatment with a good recovery, according to Ajay Swaroop, chairman, Board of Management, Sir Gangaram Hospital.

Countdown to launch of PSLV-C62 mission begins

The vehicle, carrying an earth observation satellite and 15 'co-passengers' developed by Indian and overseas customers, is set to lift off at 10.17 a.m today; it is the 105th launch from Sriharikota

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The ISRO said that after the injection of EOS-N1 and 14 satellites, the PS4 stage will be re-started to de-boost and enter a re-entry trajectory, followed by KID Capsule separation. @isro/X

The 22.5-hour countdown to the launch of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV), carrying an earth observation satellite and 15 co-passenger satellites, commenced at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota on Sunday.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is scheduled to launch the PSLV-C62/EOS-N1 Mission at 10.17 a.m. on Monday from the first launch pad of the Satish Dhawan Space Centre. This will be the 105th launch from Sriharikota. It will also be the 64th flight of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle and the fifth mission of the PSLV-DL variant.

The 15 co-passenger satellites have been developed by start-ups and academic institutions from India and abroad. The EOS-N1 satellite is said to have been built for strategic purposes.

"It is a commercial mission of NewSpace India Limited (NSIL). EOS-N1 and 14 co-passenger satellites will be injected into a Sun Synchronous Orbit and KID Capsule into a re-entry trajectory," the ISRO said.

It added that after the injection of EOS-N1 and 14 satellites, the PS4 stage will be re-started to de-boost and enter a re-entry trajectory, followed by KID Capsule separation. "Both PS4 stage and KID Capsule will re-enter into Earth's Atmosphere and impact will be in the South Pacific Ocean," the ISRO said.

The 15 co-passengers are: Theos-2 earth observation satellite built jointly by Thailand and the U.K.; CGUSAT by Dhruva Space (India); DSUSAT by Dhruva Space; MOI-1 by Dhruva Space and Takeme2Space (India); LACHIT by Dhruva Space and and Don Bosco University (India); Thybolt-3 by Dhruva Space; Munal by Nepal university Antharkshya Pratishtan (Nepal) and MEA, GoI; KID Capsule by Orbital Paradigm (Spain) and RIDE! (France); Edusat by AlltoSpace (Brazil); Uaisat by AlltoSpace; Galaxy Explorer by AlltoSpace; Orbital Temple by AlltoSpace; Aldebaran-1 by AlltoSpace; Sanskarsat by Laxman Gyanpith (India); and AyulSat by OrbitAid (India).

Faster, demand-led approach needed for PSE privatisation: CII

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has suggested an accelerated four-pronged strategy to unlock value from the disinvestment of public sector enterprises (PSEs), calling for a demand-driven approach in selecting units for privatisation, and following a predictable road map.

In its proposals for the Union Budget 2026-27, the industry lobby urged the Union government to mobilise resources through a calibrated approach to privatisation focusing on sectors where private participation can enhance efficiency, technology infusion, and global competitiveness, to sustain capital expenditure and address developmental priorities amid global economic uncertainties.

The CII called upon the Centre to announce a rolling three-year privatisation pipeline, outlining which enterprises are likely to be taken up for privatisation during this period while recognising that full privatisation of all non-strategic PSEs is a complex and time-consuming process. It argued that this visibility would encourage deeper investor engagement and more realistic valuation and price discovery, which would contribute towards expediting the privatisation process.

Releasing value

"Government could reduce its stake in listed PSEs in a phased manner to 51% initially, allowing it to remain the single largest shareholder while releasing significant value into the market. Over time, this stake could be brought down further to between 33% and 26%," the CII stated in its proposal.

Reducing the government's stake to 51% in 78 listed PSEs could unlock close to ₹10 lakh crore, according to its analysis.

"A calibrated reduction of the government's stake in listed PSEs to 51% and even lower is a pragmatic step that balances strategic control with value creation. Unlocking nearly ₹10 lakh crore of productive capital would provide vital resources to accelerate physical and social infrastructure development and support fiscal consolidation," CII Director-General Chandrajit Banerjee said.

Environment Ministry funds sought for forest management committees

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI

Officials of the Tribal Affairs and Environment Ministries discussed the funding issue recently. FILE PHOTO

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is in talks with the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change for funding the management of community forest resources, for which rights have been vested in gram sabhas of tribal communities and other forest-dwellers across the country under the Forest Rights Act (FRA), government officials said.

Officials of both Ministries met over it recently, and the Tribal Affairs Ministry is also planning to write to the Environment Ministry formally on this matter, a top official told *The Hindu*, adding that this was necessary to "correct the perception" that the forest bureaucracy was at odds with the goals of community-led forest resource management.

For the last 20 years, the FRA has recognised the historical rights of Scheduled Tribe communities and other forest-dwellers on the forests they have lived in and around and vested these rights in them through FRA titles for specific sets of rights. Under the FRA, gram sabhas are entitled to include community forest resource rights (CFR) over areas "they have been traditionally protecting, regenerating, conserving and managing for sustainable use".

In 2023, the Tribal Affairs Ministry issued guidelines for the management of forests for which CFR rights had already been granted to gram sabhas.

These guidelines provided for setting up CFR management committees under the title-holding gram sabhas, mandating that conservation and management plans be drawn up by the communities before the Forest Department is called in to align them with the Environment Ministry's working plan codes. The Union government is now looking to rope in the Environment Ministry to fund the CFR management committees that are being set up under the FRA.

One senior official said, "The CFRM committees will need resources and help in functioning. They will need the funds to hire officials, prepare plans, and even train their own community's people in running the day-to-day operations. The idea is to get funding help from the Environment Ministry for this as well."

A meeting at the level of Secretaries of both Ministries was held over the last month. "If needed, safeguards can be built in to ensure that the planning of forest conservation and management remains community-led and is not necessarily taken over by the forest department," one of the officials said.

Reliance to invest ₹7 lakh crore in Gujarat over next five years: Ambani

Abhinay Deshpande
RAJKOT

Mukesh Ambani

Reliance Industries chairman Mukesh Ambani on Sunday said Gujarat was far more than just a location for the group.

"For Reliance, Gujarat is our body, heart, and soul. We are a Gujarati company," he said at the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference in Rajkot.

Mr. Ambani said he was making five firm commitments to the State. He said that Reliance was already Gujarat's largest investor, having invested over ₹3.5 lakh crore in the past five years. "We will double this investment to ₹7 lakh crore over the next five years. This will create exponential employment, livelihoods, and prosperity for every Gujarati and every Indian," he said.

The second commitment, he said, was to establish global leadership in clean energy and green materials. At Jamnagar, Reliance is building the world's largest integrated clean energy ecosystem, covering solar power, battery energy storage, green hydrogen, green fertilizers, sustainable aviation fuel, maritime fuels, and advanced materials.

"Jamnagar, once the world's largest exporter of hydrocarbon fuels, will in the coming years become India's largest exporter of green energy and green materials," he said. He said Reliance's multi-gigawatt, utility-scale solar project, among the largest in the world, would deliver round-the-clock clean power through advanced storage and modern grid integration, powering India's growth and reinforcing Gujarat's leadership in renewable energy.

Indigenous AI platform

The fourth commitment was to make Gujarat India's artificial intelligence pioneer. Mr. Ambani said Jio was building India's largest AI-ready data centre in Jamnagar with the goal of making AI affordable and accessible to every Indian.

"Jio will launch India's first people-centric AI platform, built in India for India and the world. It will enable every citizen, starting from Gujarat, to access AI services in their own language, on their own devices, every day, making them more efficient and productive," he said.

The fifth commitment was partnering with the Gujarat government's Olympic ambitions and social initiatives. Mr. Ambani said the Reliance Foundation fully supported the Prime Minister's vision of bringing the 2036 Olympic Games to Ahmedabad.

Karan Adani, managing director of Adani Ports and SEZ Limited, said that for the Adani Group, Gujarat "is not just a State of investment – it is our foundation". "Gujarat is where our journey began, and Gujarat is where our long-term commitment remains anchored."

"Building on this foundation, the Adani Group commits to invest ₹1.5 lakh crore over the next five years in the region of Kutch. We will complete our Khavda project and commission full 37 gigawatt of capacity by 2030, and we will also double our port capacity at Mundra in the next 10 years," he said.

TH CROSSWORD + 14689

(set by Vidwan)

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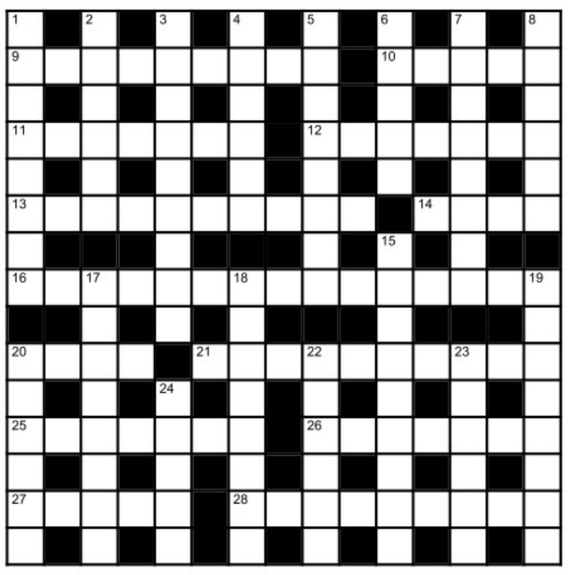
SCAN TO PLAY



Across

9 One who reproves sozzled pub attacker (9)
10 Under new form of hate (5)
11 Universal good and a new person like Idi Amin (7)
12 Almost induce twitch and burning (7)
13 Not ok! Taunting love! It is wrong, cold and bigoted! (10)
14 First class backward place (4)
16 Lady there perhaps with sadness (15)
20 Flair in Semite languages (4)
21 Climbing and thieving one art club rag, perhaps (3,7)
25 Medieval dynasty welcomed English royal, a deadly killer of yore (7)
26 A timeline followed by Santa, leaving small city in USA (7)
27 Maharishi Vashishta's a yogi! (5)
28 Honours contract mostly and millions rain! (9)

Down

1 Dishing out PJ in bar is a plan to deceive (3-2,3)
2 Get old British coach right away! (6)
3 Large and royal, complete car (9)
4 American professor is a handsome young man (6)
5 Parasite! Star kid regularly ignored friend! (8)
6 Trunk made of tin on sale (5)
7 Choke vehicular capacity, perhaps for dark chocolate! (8)
8 Sips drinks hot bearing a disappointing expression (6)
15 Clean lid, possibly for distilleries (9)
17 Talk for the most part on love, endless turmoil and a piece of religious music (8)
18 Ambassador, a backsliding scoundrel, he's a typical pain! (8)
19 Overturned horse cart with hands and parts of a sail (8)
20 Starts to exploit new chartered accountant, someone hedging to make money (6)
22 Black reptile returns, covering distance of an Amazonian state (6)
23 Tongues caught in roiling osculation (6)
24 One who runs back to run through again (5)

SUDOKU

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

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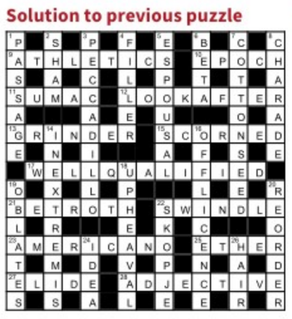
Solution to previous puzzle



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

5	2	7	6	3	4	1	9	8
6	1	9	2	8	7	5	4	3
3	8	4	1	5	9	2	6	7
1	6	8	7	4	3	9	2	5
7	9	5	8	2	6	3	1	4
2	4	3	9	1	5	7	8	6
4	7	6	3	9	2	8	5	1
8	5	2	4	7	1	6	3	9
9	3	1	5	6	8	4	7	2

FAITH

Gift we seek from Krishna

Tiruppavai means many things to many people today. For many, it is the pull of Andal's poetic Tamil and effortless presentation of bhakti. For many, it is the enduring appeal of M.L. Vasanthakumari's masterly musical presentation. For a few, it is the attraction of Pongal, especially on the day of *Koodarai Vellum Seer Govinda* and the sakkarai Pongal. However, Tiruppavai, hailed as the Tamil vedam, is the song of Srivilliputtur, where Andal emphasises on togetherness in finding eternal happiness (Perumal), said Damal Perundevi. After saluting Him with various names, Andal calls upon Govinda, three times in this pasuram (27th). Following the early morning austerities and listening to discourses on Krishna avatar (which itself comes about only if one is truly blessed), one should surrender to Perumal by saying Govinda three times and He will take care: Krishna Himself gives this assurance in the Bhagavad Gita, when he says forsake earthly needs and surrender to me, I will accept that surrender. In the Ramayana, when everyone is gathered for the Sita Rama Pattabhishekam and Vashista is about to commence the ceremonies, Perumal, who manifested as Rama, tells the sage to wait as He was unable to find His most important person. He was referring to Anjaneya, who however, chose to take his seat at the bottom of the coronation throne, in order to be able to carry the same on his shoulder. Genuinely touched, Rama offers a precious pearl necklace to Anjaneya. Andal seeks a similar, world-renowned gift, from Krishna. When He says He had gifted her everything she sought in Tiruppavai, Andal says she and her friends (devotees) only want to serve Him regardless of how many rebirths they take.

Tips for seniors seeking a home loan

Ratan Chaudhary

Buying a home is a key milestone. However, many are able to meet this aspiration only at later stages of life. While availing a home loan can be a challenge post a certain age, several banks and HFCs do offer home loans to senior citizens and retirees.

However, the eligibility and terms differ and are much stringent, especially if you are applying for a home loan post 60. Growing age, unstable income, rising medical costs and uncertainty that come with age can be a hurdle. Here are a few tips that can help.

Age-related challenges

Age is one of the biggest challenges for senior citizens in getting their loan applications approved. Even though no age bar is set by RBI for availing home loans, banks generally require an applicant to be 70-75 years old at the time of loan maturity. In that case, senior citizens applying for home loans in their 60s will only get a much shorter loan tenure. A shorter repayment period results in higher EMIs. However, the total interest cost incurred in such cases is lower.

Adding a younger co-applicant not only improves the loan eligibility of the borrower but also assists them in getting a higher loan amount. An earning member from the borrower's family with a strong credit profile can be added as a co-applicant. This would improve the chances of loan approval.

Opt for a Lower LTV Ratio

LTV ratio refers to the percentage of the property value that is sanctioned as a home loan. The remaining property value is paid as a down payment by the owner. Even though RBI has set the maximum LTV ratio to up to 90% of the property cost in certain cases, senior citizens can enhance their home loan eligibility by making a higher down payment, thereby reducing the LTV ratio and the home loan amount.

Keep EMI/NMI ratio lower

Senior citizens should assess their financial situation before applying for a home loan. Lenders usually prefer applicants to have an EMI/NMI ratio of 50-55%, including existing EMIs and the EMI of the proposed home loan. Assessing the financial situation beforehand enables applicants to plan their EMIs well within their monthly budget, without compromising on their savings and investments. Keeping a low EMI/NMI ratio would increase the chances of loan approval.

Compare rates and offers

Many lenders offer special interest rates and other offers to senior citizens, including retirees. These are generally better than those offered to regular home loan borrowers. Senior citizens planning to avail a home loan can compare rates and offers across various lenders before applying for the loan. They can also connect with the bank where they have an existing relationship for special offers, if any. Pre-approved home loans provide in-principal sanction of the loan amount they are eligible for, thereby making it easier for them to look for a property within their budget.

Maintain good credit score

Maintaining a good credit score strengthens the application and can also help senior citizens get home loans at relatively lower interest rates. Lenders consider an applicant's credit score while evaluating the loan application, and those with higher credit scores (750 and above) are considered more creditworthy. As these applicants have displayed good credit behaviour in the past, they are at a lower risk of credit default and become eligible for availing a home loan at a lower interest rate.

Senior citizens can avail a suitable home loan with the right planning and approach.

(The writer is Head of Home Loans, Paisabazaar)

Send queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.

Comprehensive cover is not the same across insurers, there are multiple variables. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

Renewing motor policy: when less can be more

Logically, the renewal premium should be lower since the sum insured reduces each year, yet it remains unchanged, or is even higher and the reasoning is that it is because the car is older

COVER NOTE

K. Nitya Kalyani

> Remember that own damage premium rates are not regulated; insurers have complete flexibility in pricing

> Quotes often mention a discount applied to the OD premium. This is negotiable, and you can ask for a better deal

In a previous piece on motor insurance, we examined how most of us renew our policies with little clarity about what we are paying for and the value we receive. To recap the basics: a motor insurance policy has two components. One is the statutory third-party (TP) liability cover, with premiums fixed by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI). The other is the own damage (OD) cover, where premiums are determined independently by insurance companies.

It is this second component that causes most of the confusion when a renewal premium quote lands in your inbox. The first step towards clarity is to place your existing policy and the renewal quote side by side, and compare what is covered, for what value, and at what price.

Start with the IDV, or insured declared value. This represents the value for which your car is insured and is derived from the ex-showroom price, adjusted for depreciation based on the vehicle's age.

In the event of theft, total loss, or damage beyond economical repair, this is the maximum amount you will receive as a claim.

Insurers usually offer an IDV range from which you can choose. You can ask for this range, and you may also opt for add-ons such as nil depreciation or return-to-invoice cover, which effectively restores the claim value closer to the original purchase price.

Once you have the IDVs, compare them with the corresponding premiums. Logically, the renewal premium should be lower, since the sum insured reduces each year. Yet, many policyholders find the premium unchanged, or even higher. The explanation typically offered is that the premium rate has increased because the car is older. Remember that OD premium rates are not regulated; insurers have complete flexibility in pricing.

Quotes often mention a discount applied to the OD premium. This is negotiable, and you can ask for a better deal. To strengthen that conversation, obtain renewal quotes from multiple insurers or use comparison websites that aggregate offerings. Armed with alternatives, an informed and persistent customer is far more likely to secure a better bargain.

The TP premium, incidentally, will be identical across insurers since it is set by IRDAI. One limited area of variation is the ₹15 lakh compulsory personal accident (PA) cover for the owner-driver, which is bundled with the TP portion. While mandatory, this cover can be waived if you already hold a PA policy of equal or higher value, either independently or for another vehicle you own. The maximum premium is capped at ₹750, though insurers often offer discounts of up to 50%. PA covers are benefit policies, meaning claims can be made under multiple policies for the same accident, as payouts are not linked to actual medical expenses.

Together, TP and OD make up what is commonly called comprehensive motor insurance. If you believe that a comprehensive cover is the same across insurers, be prepared for a rude shock. There are multiple variables, and plenty of room for confusion.

One common justification for similar premiums despite a lower IDV is the inclusion of additional or different add-on covers in the renewal quote. If so, request a quotation for exactly the same coverage as your current policy.

Also ask for a clear break-up showing each add-on and its individual premium. After all, a tyre protection cover or roadside assistance cannot logically be for the same insured amount as for the entire vehicle.

This granular break-up allows you to make informed choices – dropping covers you no longer need or adding new ones. Ideally, add-ons should be modular, but insurers often bundle them in ways that limit flexibility. Pay particular attention to cashless garage networks. Premiums can be significantly lower if cashless repairs are excluded. Depending on whether you are comfortable paying the workshop upfront and seeking reimbursement later, or prefer a seamless, hands-off claims process, you can choose accordingly.

Confusing terminology

Be alert to confusing nomenclature as well. Recently, an OD quotation listed an add-on called "car damages". On inquiry, this turned out to mean damage caused by falling objects such as trees, something already covered under standard OD insurance. Such wording creates the illusion of additional benefits where none exist.

That said, many insurers genuinely offer competitive pricing.

This may stem from operational efficiencies such as fully digital models that reduce overheads, or from scale advantages that allow them to operate on thinner margins.

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance and corporate history)

Personal Loans

Rates and Charges		Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years	Loan amount 1 lakh Tenure 5 years	(% of loan amount)
Name of Lender	**Interest Rate (%)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**Processing fee**
HDFC Bank	9.99 onwards	10,621 onwards	2,124 onwards	Up to Rs 6,500
Tata Capital	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 3.5%
State Bank of India	10.05-15.05	10,636-11,908	2,127-2,382	NIL till January 31
ICICI Bank	10.45 onwards	10,735 onwards	2,147 onwards	Up to 2%
Bank of Baroda*	10.15-18.05	10,660-12,710	2,132-2,542	Up to 2% (Max. Rs 10,000)
Axis Bank	9.99 onwards	10,621 onwards	2,124 onwards	Up to 2%
Kotak Mahindra Bank	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 5%
Bank of India	10.85-16.15	10,834-12,199	2,167-2,440	Up to 1% (Min. Rs 250; Max. Rs 15,000)
Canara Bank	9.70-15.15	10,550-11.934	2,110-2,387	Up to 50% (Rs 1,000 - Rs 5,000)
Punjab National Bank	10.25-16.80	10,685-12,373	2,137-2,475	Up to 1%
HSBC Bank	9.95 onwards	10,611 onwards	2,122 onwards	Up to 2%
Federal Bank	11.99 onwards	11,120 onwards	2,224 onwards	Up to 3%
Union Bank of India	8.75 - 12.20	10,319-11,173	2,064-2,235	Up to 1% (Max. Rs 7,500)
Bajaj Finserv	10.00-31.00	10,624-16,485	2,125-3,297	Up to 3.93%
Punjab & Sind Bank	9.60-13.85	10,525-11,595	2,105-2,319	0.50%-1%
Indian Overseas Bank	10.25 onwards	10,685 onwards	2,137 onwards	Up to 0.75%
UCO Bank	9.95 - 13.20	10,611-11,428	2,122-2,286	Up to 1% (Min. Rs 750)
IDFC FIRST Bank	9.99 onwards	10,621 onwards	2,124 onwards	2%
Bank of Maharashtra	8.75-13.55	10,319-11,518	2,064-2,304	Up to 1% (Max. Rs 10,000)
Central Bank of India	9.65-11.55	10,538-11,009	2,108-2,202	Up to 1%

Car Loans

Rates and Charges		Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years	(% of loan amount)
Name of Lender	**Interest Rate (%)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**Processing fee**
Union Bank of India	7.40-9.45	9,995 - 10,489	Up to Rs 1,000
Punjab National Bank	7.55-9.45	10,031 - 10,489	Up to 0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 1,500)
Bank of Baroda	7.90 - 11.35	10,114 - 10,959	Up to Rs. 2,000
Canara Bank	7.45-11.45	10,007 - 10,984	0.25% (Rs 1,000 - Rs 5,000)
Bank of India	7.60-12.55	10,043 - 11,262	Up to 0.25% (Rs. 2,500 - Rs. 10,000)
UCO Bank	7.35-10.00	9,983 - 10,624	0.5% (Max. Rs 5,000)
State Bank of India	8.7	10,307	Rs 750 - Rs 1,500
IDBI Bank	7.75-9.40	10,078 - 10,477	Rs 2,500
Bank of Maharashtra*	7.45-11.75	10,007 - 11,059	NIL
Indian Overseas Bank	7.55-12.00	10,031 - 11,122	0.50% (Rs 500 - Rs 5,000)
ICICI Bank	8.50 onwards	10,258 onwards	Up to 2%
HDFC Bank	8.20 onwards	10,186 onwards	Up to 0.5% (Rs. 3,500 - Rs. 8,000)
Karnataka Bank	8.00-11.50	10,138 - 10,996	Up to 0.60% (Rs. 2,500 - Rs. 11,000)
Federal Bank	10.00 onwards	10,624 onwards	Rs. 2,000 - Rs. 4,500
Punjab and Sind Bank**	7.50-14.00	10,019 - 11,634	0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 15,000)
Indian Bank	7.50-9.55	10,019 - 10,513	Rs. 1,000
Central Bank of India	7.60-9.20	10,043 - 10,428	No processing fees till 31.03.2026

*0.25% rate concession for home loan borrowers,existing customers with at least 6 months relationship with bank
**Concession of up to 50% on processing fee for PSB Apna Vahan Sugam.

Rates and charges as on January 7 **Source: Paisabazaar.com**

Addressing the choice overload problem

THINKINVESTOR

Unable to select funds among numerous choices, many have their savings locked in bank deposits, earning lower returns unintentionally

Venkatesh Bangaruswamy

As humans, we typically want more choices. But more choices can be confusing. It is easier to choose an active fund from 10 funds than from 100 funds. With continual entry of new asset management firms (AMCs) into the industry, the choice of mutual fund products has increased over the years. In this article, we look at why more fund choices lead to less behaviourally-optimal selection by investors.

When in doubt, we diversify. So, we can take a decision when faced with fewer fund choices, even if we are unsure of those choices. Faced with N number of choices, we simply allocate our savings equally across the N choices. Behavioural psychologists call this diversification heuristics. Now, that is optimal when the number of choices is five or less. What happens when you have 100 or more funds to choose from? The choices can be overwhelming. At the extreme, this can lead to individuals suffering from status quo basis. Unable to select funds because of the numerous choices, many individuals could keep their savings in bank deposits, unintentionally earning lower returns.

Even if you were to invest in several of these funds, there could be an issue of investment overlap. Consider this. AMFI lists several classes of funds with NSE 500 as the intended Tier 1 benchmark. Among other funds, the following can choose the NSE 500 Index: flexi-cap funds, dividend yield funds, thematic funds, momentum funds and sector rotation funds. The benchmark index is the investable universe for these funds. That is, these funds will be created out of the 500 stocks that constitute the index. You may hold a flexi-cap fund, a sector rotation fund and a dividend yield fund. Despite their different styles, your portfolio may have exposure to similar set of stocks because of the common benchmark, exposing you to high risk in the event these stock prices decline.

Is there a way to moderate issues relating to the choice overload, given that the supply of new funds in the market is unlikely to reduce? Perhaps, it is best to group all funds based on their benchmark regardless of their investment styles. That way, your choice can be based on benchmarks which are fewer in number compared to fund styles. Within a benchmark, individuals are likely to look at consistently top-performing funds. While the way individuals select funds may not always be optimal, the confusion from too many choices can be minimized.

(The author offers training programmes for individuals to manage their personal investments)

KAWHMU

Myanmar votes in second phase of junta-controlled general election

AP

Myanmar's junta held the second phase of elections on Sunday that democracy watchdogs warn will let the military prolong its rule. The Union Solidarity and Development Party described by many analysts as the military's prime proxy, won nearly 90% of lower house seats in the first phase late last month. AFP

WASHINGTON

Venezuela's Machado cannot give Peace Prize to Trump: Nobel body

AFP

The Nobel Institute said on Friday that the Nobel Peace Prize once announced, can't be revoked, transferred or shared with others. The statement comes after Venezuelan leader Maria Corina Machado said she would like to give or share her prize with Donald Trump, after U.S. forces captured Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro. AP

BANGKOK

Four injured in bomb detonations across southern Thailand: Army

AFP

Assailants detonated bombs at 11 petrol stations across Thailand's southern provinces of Narathiwat, Pattani and Yala on Sunday injuring four people, an Army statement said. A low-level conflict since 2004 has killed thousands as rebels in the Muslim-majority region bordering Malaysia battle for greater autonomy. AFP

ALEPPO

Syria govt. forces take control of Aleppo's Kurdish neighbourhoods

REUTERS

Syria's government took control of Aleppo on Sunday after taking over the city's Kurdish neighbourhoods and evacuating fighters to Kurdish autonomous areas following days of deadly clashes. In all, 300 Kurds had been arrested and over 400 Kurdish fighters were transferred from the Sheikh Maqsud neighbourhood. AFP

More protesters killed in Iran unrest as concerns grow over 'crackdown'

Tehran vows to strike back if the United States launches attacks; President Trump has been offered military options, say U.S. media; demonstrations have lasted for two weeks now; state media broadcasts funeral processions of security forces

Associated Press
DUBAI

Iran's Parliament Speaker warned on Sunday that the U.S. military and Israel would be "legitimate targets" if the U.S. strikes the Islamic Republic over the ongoing protests roiling the country, as threatened by President Donald Trump.

Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf made the threat after nationwide protests challenging Iran's theocracy saw protesters flood the streets in the country's capital Tehran and Mashhad, its second-largest city into Sunday morning, crossing the two-week mark.

Image grab from a footage circulating on social media shows protesters taking to the streets in Tehran, Iran on Friday. AP

With the internet down in Iran and phone lines cut off, gauging the demonstrations from abroad has grown more difficult.

According to its latest figures, the U.S.-based rights group Human Rights Activists News Agency said 490 protesters and 48 security personnel have been killed, with more than 10,600 people arrested.

Mr. Trump offered support for the protesters, saying on social media that "Iran is looking at FREEDOM, perhaps like never before. The USA stands ready to help!!!"

The *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal*, citing anonymous U.S. officials, said that Mr. Trump had been given military options for a strike on Iran, but had not made a final decision.

Israel 'watching closely'

Israel, meanwhile, is "watching closely" the situation between the U.S. and Iran, said an Israeli official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Sunday that he hoped Iran would soon be freed from what he described as the "yoke of tyranny".

State TV aired funerals of slain security force members while reporting another six had been killed in Kermanshah. In Fars province, violence killed 13 people, and seven security forces were killed in North Khorasan province, it added, as authorities condemned "riots" and "vandalism".

Iran's security chief Ali Larijani drew a line between protests over economic hardship, which he called "completely understandable", and "riots", accusing them of actions "very similar to the methods of terrorist groups", *Tasnim* news agency reported.

Venezuelans await release of more political prisoners; Maduro 'doing well', says son

Agence France-Presse
CARACAS

Venezuelans were waiting for more political prisoners to be released on Sunday, as ousted President Nicolas Maduro defiantly claimed from his U.S. jail cell that he is "doing fine" after being seized by U.S. forces a week ago.

Interim President Delcy Rodriguez has begun to free prisoners jailed under Mr. Maduro, saying a "large" number would be released in a gesture of appeasement.

"Venezuela has started the process, in a BIG WAY, of releasing their political prisoners. Thank you!" Mr. Trump said in a post on his Truth Social platform on Saturday.

Family members hold candles and posters during a vigil outside a prison on Sunday

Rights groups estimate there are 800 to 1,200 political prisoners held in Venezuela. Only 21 people had been released by Saturday evening. A detained police officer accused of "treason" had died in custody, the opposition and rights groups said on Saturday. Anxious relatives have camped outside jails, awaiting the promised release of political prisoners. Families held candlelight vigils outside El Rodeo prison and El Helicoide, a notorious prison run by the intelligence services, displaying signs with the names of jailed relatives.

Loyalists stage rally

Mr. Maduro claimed he was "doing well" in jail in New York, his son Nicolas Maduro Guerra said in a video released by his party on Saturday.

Around 1,000 protesters, waving flags and placards with the face of the mustachioed ex-leader, rallied in the west of Caracas and a few hundred in the eastern Petare district.

Trump delivers oil warning, urges Cuba to 'strike a deal with U.S. before it is too late'

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump urged Cuba on Sunday to "make a deal" or face unspecified consequences, warning that the flow of Venezuelan oil and money to Havana would now stop.

"THERE WILL BE NO MORE OIL OR MONEY GOING TO CUBA - ZERO!" Mr. Trump said on his Truth Social channel. "I strongly suggest they make a deal, BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE."

Earlier on Sunday, Mr. Trump reposted a message suggesting that U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio could become the President of Cuba. Mr. Trump shared that post with the comment: "Sounds good to me!"

U.S. President reposts a message suggesting that Marco Rubio could become the President of Cuba

In his own post soon afterwards, Mr. Trump said that "Cuba lived, for many years, on large amounts of OIL and MONEY from Venezuela. In return, Cuba provided 'Security Services' for the last two Venezuelan dictators, BUT NOT ANYMORE!"

Cuba rebuffs threat

Cuba's President Miguel Diaz-Canel on Sunday rebuffed Mr. Donald Trump's threat against his country, vowing to defend.

"Cuba is a free, independent and sovereign nation. No one tells us what to do," Mr. Diaz-Canel wrote on X, adding that the Caribbean island was "ready to defend the homeland to the last drop of blood."

Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez said Cuba has not received compensation for security services provided to any other country, according to a post on X on Sunday. He said that Cuba has the right to import fuel from any country willing to export it.

Mr. Rodriguez accused the U.S. of behaving in a "criminal" manner that threatens global peace.

Under a U.S. trade embargo, Havana since 2000 has increasingly relied on Venezuelan oil provided as part of a deal struck with Nicolas Maduro's predecessor Hugo Chavez.

Israeli forces shoot dead three in Gaza, tension rises

Reuters
CAIRO

Israeli fire killed at least three Palestinians in two separate incidents across the enclave, local health authorities said, as tension rises over continued violence.

Medics said one Palestinian was killed in the Tuffah neighbourhood in Gaza City, in an area under Palestinian control, while two others were killed in the town of Bani Suhaila east of Khan Younis, an area Israel still occupies.

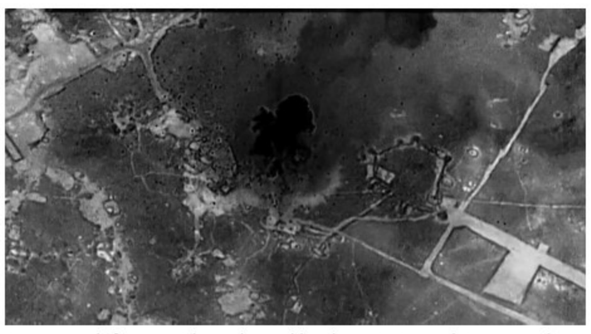
More than 440 Palestinians, most of them civilians according to Gaza health officials, have been killed since Israel and Hamas agreed to a ceasefire in October, two years into the war, as well as three Israeli soldiers.

U.S., allies launch retaliatory strikes on IS targets in Syria after deadly ambush

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

U.S. and allied forces carried out "large-scale" strikes against the Islamic State (IS) jihadist group in Syria on Saturday, the U.S. military said, the latest response to an attack last month that killed three Americans.

U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), which oversees American military forces in the region, said multiple strikes "targeted ISIS throughout Syria," using an acronym for the jihadist group.



Screen grab from a video released by the U.S. Central Command shows strikes carried out against IS targets in Syria. X/CENTCOM

The strikes were part of Operation Hawkeye Strike, which was launched "in direct response to the deadly ISIS attack on US and Syrian forces in Palmyra," CENTCOM said.

Jordan's air force also carried out targeted air strikes as part of the operation, its military said on Sunday. It said in a statement it struck "a number of targets... in several areas within Syria territory".

Two U.S. soldiers and a U.S. civilian interpreter were killed on December 13 after a lone gunman, whom Washington described as an IS militant, ambushed them in Palmyra. Syria's Interior Ministry later said the gunman was a member of the security forces who had been set to be fired for extremism.

The United States and Jordan carried out strikes last month in response to the Palmyra attack, with CENTCOM saying at the time that "more than 70 targets" had been hit.

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RUN MACHINE

Kohli becomes the fastest to reach 28,000 runs across formats

VIJAY SONEJI

Virat Kohli (624th innings) became the fastest to reach 28,000 runs, reaching the milestone quicker than Sachin Tendulkar (644 innings) and Kumar Sangakkara (666). Kohli (28,068) also went past Sangakkara (28,016 runs) to move to second in the all-time list. Tendulkar (34,357) leads the pack.

DREAM-COME-TRUE

Kohli says he looks at his journey with grace and gratitude

VIJAY SONEJI

My journey has been nothing short of a dream-come-true for me. I look at my journey with grace and gratitude. With the way I am playing at the moment, I am not looking at milestones. The only thing on my mind is to help the team win — Virat Kohli, the architect of India's win in the opening ODI against New Zealand on Sunday.

GOING BERSERK

Devine smashes the most runs in an over in a WPL match

PTI

Sneh Rana holds the dubious record of bowling the most expensive over (32 runs) in the WPL. Gujarat Giants' Sophie Devine took the Delhi Capitals spinner to the cleaners in the final over of the PowerPlay, smashing four sixes and two fours. UP Warriorz's Deepti Sharma (28 vs RCB in 2024) held the record previously.

ELITE CLUB

Nandani becomes the fourth to perform the 'trick in the league

PTI

DC's Nandani Sharma (5/33 vs. GG) became the fourth bowler to perform a hat-trick in the WPL. MI's Issy Wong (vs. UPW, 2023), the UPW pair of Deepti Sharma (vs. DC, 2024) and Grace Harris (vs. DC, 2025) are the others. Nandani is the second Indian with a five-for after RCB's Asha Sobhana (5/22 vs UPW, 2024).

Kohli, Gill excel as Men in Blue overcome a stutter to go one up

Rahul takes the home team past the finish line with an over to spare after Jamieson leads the fightback for the Kiwis; the visiting side fails to capitalise on a solid opening stand; Mitchell continues his merry run against the Indians

NZ IN INDIA

Amol Karhadkar
VADODARA

Punching above its weight has long been New Zealand's calling card in international cricket.

The Black Caps have repeatedly risen to the occasion, but the damage inflicted up front by Virat Kohli and Shubman Gill proved too much for the visitors on Sunday.

Chasing 301 on a chilly, dew-laden evening at the Baroda Cricket Association Stadium, India eventually crossed the line – albeit after a stutter – to take a 1-0 lead in the three-match ODI series.

Seizing the initiative

Even after Rohit Sharma departed following a brisk cameo and Gill gifted leg-spinner Adithya Ashok a wicket post a composed half-century, India remained firmly in control. Kohli slipped seamlessly into chase-master mode, while Shreyas Iyer launched an assault on spin after taking strike.

Kohli, meanwhile, was the star attraction having started with six fours in his first 20 balls before settling into rotating-the-strike mode. Gill went after Adithya soon after he was introduced into the attack post-PowerPlay, thus paving way for captain Michael Bracewell to bring himself on.

With 67 required from 11 overs and Kohli in the 90s, the crowd braced itself for a hundred from the maestro and a comfortable finish. But Kyle Jamieson dramatically swung momentum by claiming three wickets off seven balls.

Triple strikes

Kohli fell attempting to go over mid-off, Ravindra Jadeja was caught at mid-on off a cross-seam delivery, and Shreyas was bowled by another cutter, leaving India rattled.

With Washington Sundar injured on the field, Harshit Rana joined K.L. Rahul at the crease. Harshit first saved the hat-trick and then swung freely before falling for a 23-ball 29.

Washington then joined a composed Rahul in the middle. With run-rate in check, it was Rahul's back-to-back boundaries followed by a decisive heave over the cow corner for a six off debutant Kristian Clarke in the penultimate over that sealed the chase.

Superb start

Earlier, a reprieve for Henry Nicholls by Kuldeep Yadav in the deep in the sixth over allowed the opener to add 117 inside 22 overs with fellow left-hander Devon Conway. Harshit broke the stand on his return, dismissing Nicholls and Conway in successive overs. Apart from Daryl Mitchell, who once again troubled India, the middle-order failed to capitalise on the fine start.

Late charge

Mitchell's late assault, especially off Prasidh Krishna before being beaten for pace by the same bowler, helped New Zealand add 88 in the final 10 overs to reach the mark of 300. In the end, it wasn't enough.

Over to Rajkot.

Master at work: Kohli led the Indian chase with an authoritative knock of 93. VIJAY SONEJI

SCOREBOARD

NEW ZEALAND

Devon Conway b Harshit 56 *(67b, 6x4, 1x6)*, Henry Nicholls c Rahul b Harshit 62 *(69b, 8x4)*, Will Young c Rahul b Siraj 12 *(16b)*, Daryl Mitchell lbw b Prasidh 84 *(71b, 5x4, 3x6)*, Glenn Phillips c Shreyas b Kuldeep 12 *(19b, 1x4)*, Mitchell Hay b Prasidh 18 *(13b, 2x4)*, Michael Bracewell run out 16 *(18b, 1x4)*, Zak Foulkes b Siraj 1 *(2b)*, Kristian Clarke (not out) 24 *(17b, 3x4)*, Kyle Jamieson (not out) 8 *(8b, 1x4)*; Extras (w-7): 7; Total (for eight wkts. in 50 overs): 300.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-117 (Nicholls, 21.4 overs), 2-126 (Conway, 23.6), 3-146 (Young, 27.5), 4-170 (Phillips, 33.2), 5-198 (Hay, 37.3), 6-237 (Bracewell, 42.6), 7-239 (Foulkes, 43.3), 8-281 (Mitchell, 47.4).

INDIA BOWLING

Siraj 8-0-40-2, Harshit 10-0-65-2, Washington 5-0-27-0, Prasidh 9-0-60-2, Kuldeep 9-0-52-1, Jadeja 9-0-56-0.

INDIA

Rohit Sharma c Bracewell b Jamieson 26 *(29b, 3x4, 2x6)*, Shubman Gill c Phillips b Adithya 56 *(71b, 3x4, 2x6)*, Virat Kohli c Bracewell b Jamieson 93 *(91b, 8x4, 1x6)*, Shreyas Iyer b Jamieson 49 *(47b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Ravindra Jadeja c Clarke b Jamieson 4 *(5b)*, K.L. Rahul (not out) 29 *(21b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Harshit Rana c Hay b Clarke 29 *(23b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Washington Sundar (not out) 7 *(7b)*; Extras (lb-4, w-9): 13; Total (for six wkts. in 49 overs): 306.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-39 (Rohit, 8.4), 2-157 (Gill, 26.3), 3-234 (Kohli, 39.1), 4-239 (Jadeja, 39.6), 5-242 (Shreyas, 41.1), 6-279 (Harshit, 46.2).

NEW ZEALAND BOWLING

Jamieson 10-1-41-4, Foulkes 10-0-49-0, Adithya 6-0-55-1, Clarke 10-0-73-1, Bracewell 8-0-56-0, Phillips 4-0-21-0, Mitchell 1-0-7-0.

Toss: India; **PoM:** Kohli.
India won by four wickets with one over to spare, leads 1-0 in three-match series. **Second ODI: January 14,** Rajkot, 1.30 p.m.

Devine's all-round heroics help Giants edge Capitals

WPL-4

Lavanya L
NAVI MUMBAI

Defeats sometimes take the sheen off some stupendous performances. Lizelle Lee's valiant 86, Laura Wolvaardt's defiant 77 and and a scintillating five-wicket haul by Nandani Sharma, which included a hat-trick in the 20th over, could not help Delhi Capitals get off the mark in the WPL 2026.

Gujarat Giants persevered to eke out a four-run win at the D.Y. Patil Stadium here on Sunday. Sophie Devine, who smashed 95 off 42 deliveries, starred with the ball too as she produced a dream final over to make it two out of two for Giants.

Put in to bat, Giants' overseas batters, led by Devine, dominated, putting on a range-hitting masterclass, piercing gaps and clearing the fence without breaking a sweat. It helped Giants reach 80 for no loss in the PowerPlay and 122 for one at the end of the 10th over, as Devine combined with Gardner to keep DC under the pump.

Nandani ruined Devine's bid for a maiden hundred in the tournament history with Shree Charani holding on to a tough catch. Shree Charani then removed Georgia Wareham with a flying Jemimah Rodrigues pocketing a sharp one at extra cover. Gardner took charge of the innings, falling only after getting Giants past the 200-run mark.

After being entrusted with only three overs against Mumbai Indians 24 hours ago, Jemimah backed Nandani to bowl the 20th. She repaid the faith with four scalps to not only perform a hat-trick, but also complete a five-for.

After Shafali Verma departed early, Lee combined with her old South African opening partner Wolvaardt to give Capitals a whirlwind start.

Lee was innovative as she picked the gaps with ease. Her 12 fours came from smart thinking, as she even flat-batted deliveries from outside off to the ropes. She also hit three sixes.

Devine, who has missed a WPL ton twice by a whisker, ruined Lee's chances of getting there, holding on to a chance at long on.

When Chinelle Henry departed early, Wolvaardt, who was on 36 off 23 balls, came alive. She bludgeoned 40 runs from the next 13 balls, helped by some loose bowling. The equation quickly dropped from 60 off 24 balls to seven off the last six. However, Devine claimed two wickets and gave away just two runs to leave Capitals agonisingly short.

Hogging the limelight: Devine smashed 95 off just 42 balls while rookie medium-pacer Nandani claimed a five-for. Wolvaardt and Lee made a spirited chase but Capitals fell short by a whisker. PTI

SCOREBOARD

GUJARAT GIANTS

Beth Mooney c & b Shree Charani 19 *(16b, 2x4)*, Sophie Devine c Shree Charani b Nandani 95 *(42b, 7x4, 8x6)*, Ashleigh Gardner c Wolvaardt b Henry 49 *(26b, 4x4, 3x6)*, Georgia Wareham c Jemimah b Shree Charani 3 *(3b)*, Anushka Sharma c Nandani b Shafali 13 *(10b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Bharti Fulmali c Wolvaardt b Henry 3 *(6b)*, Kashvee Gautam c Henry b Nandani 14 *(10b, 1x6)*, Kanika Ahuja st. Lee b Nandani 4 *(5b)*, Tanuja Kanwer (not out) 1 *(1b)*, Rajeshwari Gayakwad b Nandani 0 *(1b)*, Renuka Singh b Nandani 0 *(1b)*; Extras (nb-1, w-7): 8; Total (in 20 overs): 209.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-94 (Mooney, 8.1 overs), 2-126 (Devine, 10.4), 3-129 (Wareham, 11.1), 4-151 (Anushka, 13.5), 5-165 (Bharti, 15.2), 6-201 (Gardner, 17.6), 7-208 (Kashvee, 19.2), 8-209 (Kanika, 19.4), 9-209 (Rajeshwari, 19.5).

CAPITALS BOWLING

Kapp 4-0-25-0, Henry 4-0-43-2, Nandani 4-0-33-5, Sneh 1-0-32-0, Shree Charani 4-0-42-2, Shafali 2-0-21-1, Minnu 1-0-13-0.

DELHI CAPITALS

Lizelle Lee c Devine b Kashvee 86 *(54b, 12x4, 3x6)*, Shafali Verma b Rajeshwari 14 *(12b, 2x4)*, Laura Wolvaardt c Wareham b Devine 77 *(38b, 9x4, 3x6)*, Chinelle Henry c Gardner b Rajeshwari 7 *(6b, 1x6)*, Jemimah Rodrigues c Mooney b Devine 15 *(9b, 2x4)*, Marizanne Kapp (not out) 1 *(2b)*, Sneh Rana (not out) 0 *(1b)*; Extras (nb-2, w-3): 5; Total (for five wkts. in 20 overs): 205.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-41 (Shafali, 5.1), 2-131 (Lee, 14.2), 3-146 (Henry, 15.5), 4-204 (Jemimah, 19.2), 5-205 (Wolvaardt, 19.5).

GIANTS BOWLING

Renuka 2-0-17-0, Kashvee 4-0-48-1, Devine 3-0-21-2, Rajeshwari 4-0-34-2, Wareham 2-0-30-0, Tanuja 3-0-27-0, Gardner 2-0-28-0.

Toss: Capitals; **PoM:** Devine.
Giants won by four runs.

Today's match

RCB vs UP WARRIORZ

Navi Mumbai, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: **6**

RCB **3** | UPW **3**

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 & JIOHOTSTAR

Yip and So emerge champions in blitz

TATA STEEL CHESS

C. Shyam Sundar
KOLKATA

American Carissa Yip held her nerve to win the tie-break 1.5-0.5 against India's Vantika Agrawal to claim the women's blitz title in the Tata Steel Chess India 2026 at the Dhono Dhanyo Auditorium here on Sunday.

Earlier, Yip's compatriot Wesley So won the open event without much drama, sewing up the title with a round to spare. He finished with 12 points while Nihal Sarin, the rapid champion, was second with 11 points ahead of Arjun Erigaisi (11).

It was a topsy-turvy day as Yip let slip the chance of winning the top prize by beating Divya Deshmukh in the 18th and final round, only being able to eke out a draw. Vantika, meanwhile, surged to the joint top spot, notching up four straight wins in the home stretch.

In the tie-break, the 22-year-old American took the first game with black pieces and kept Vantika at bay in the second to emerge triumphant.

So played in a solid manner to walk away with the trophy. He remained unbeaten till the final round where he was outmanoeuvred by R. Praggnanandhaa, but it didn't matter much in the end.

Indian legend Viswanathan Anand after an impressive second place-finish in the rapid event, failed to reproduce the magic and was eighth in the blitz.

King and queen: So gave a solid performance while Yip held her nerve in the tie-breaker. DEBASISH BHADURI

Final standings (after 18 rounds): Open: 1. Wesley So (USA) 12 points, 2. Nihal Sarin 11, 3. Arjun Erigaisi 11, 4. Hans Niemann (USA) 10, 5. Vidit Gujrathi 10.

Women: 1. Carissa Yip (USA) 10.5 points, 2. Vantika Agrawal 10.5, 3. Stavroula Tsolakidou (Greece) 10, 4. Aleksandra Goryachkina (Russia) 9.5, 5. R. Vaishali 9.5.

Lancers move to top spot; Royals rally to post first win

Sports Bureau

Vedanta Kalinga Lancers prevailed over HIL GC 3-1 in the shootout after the two teams were tied 1-1 at the end of regulation time in the Men's Hero Hockey India League in Ranchi on Sunday. Lancers also moved to the top spot.

Ranchi Royals secured its first win, staging a late rally to stun defending champion Shrachi Bengal Tigers 4-1.

The results: Vedanta Kalinga Lancers 1 (Ajeet 19) drew with HIL GC 1 (Hendrickx 23). Lancers won 3-1 in shootout; Ranchi Royals 4 (Boon 54, 60, Mandeep 56, Sharp 58) bt Shrachi Bengal Tigers 1 (Ketan 26).

INBRIEF

Kerala women spikers retain title; Railways men triumph

It was mixed luck for Kerala in the 72nd senior National volleyball championships in Varanasi on Sunday. Defending champion Kerala women retained the title with a 22-25, 25-20, 25-15, 22-25, 15-8 win over Railways. However, Kerala men lost to Railways 19-25, 17-25, 19-25 in the title clash. Punjab took the bronze in men's section after defeating Services 25-21, 25-23, 25-18 in the loser's final. Rajasthan women won the bronze, beating Haryana 25-14, 25-12, 20-25, 25-14.

Mortara secures Mahindra Racing a podium finish

Mahindra Racing secured its first podium of the latest Formula E season as Edoardo Mortara finished second in round two of the electric racing series in Mexico City on Saturday. The Indian team's other driver, Nick De Vries, could not finish the race. Citroen Racing's Nick Cassidy made up 12 positions in a calculated, pitch-perfect drive to win ahead of Mortara and reigning champion Oliver Rowland of Nissan.

Vitidsarn wins after Shi retires; An triumphs

Thailand's Kunlavut Vitidsarn won the Malaysia Open men's singles badminton title in Kuala Lumpur Sunday when world No.1 Shi Yuqi retired with injury. Shi, the Chinese 29-year-old defending champion pulled out early in the second game of the final with a back injury, while trailing 21-23, 1-6. The women's singles final saw world No. 1 South Korean An Se-young clinch her third consecutive title in the tournament with a 21-15, 24-22 victory over China's Wang Zhiyi.

Svitolina clinches her 19th WTA Tour title

Top seed Elina Svitolina powered to a 6-3, 7-6(6) victory over China's Wang Xinyu in the Auckland Classic final on Sunday in an impressive display just a week before the Australian Open. Ukraine's Svitolina won her 19th career title in a battle between two baseline specialists.

Sabalenka, Medvedev win Brisbane International titles

World No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka won her second successive Brisbane International crown on Sunday. Sabalenka scored a 6-4, 6-3 win over Ukraine's Marta Kostyuk in just 78 minutes. Russian world No. 13 Daniil Medvedev was too strong for American Brandon Nakashima and ran out a 6-2, 7-6(1) winner in 96 minutes in the men's final.

LIVE TELECAST

Vijay Hazare Trophy: JioHotstar, 9 a.m.
HIL: Sony Sports Ten 1 & LIV, 5 & 7.30 p.m.
WPL: Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.
Bundesliga: Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 11 p.m.
Serie A: DAZN, 1.15 a.m. (Tuesday)
LaLiga: FanCode, 1.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

Karnataka meets Mumbai in marquee clash; Saurashtra runs into red-hot U.P.

Delhi, riding on its pace trio, starts favourite against Vidarbha while Punjab locks horns with Madhya Pradesh in Tuesday's quarterfinal encounters

HAZARE TROPHY

Ashwin Achal
BENGALURU

Karnataka takes on Mumbai in a heavyweight Vijay Hazare Trophy quarterfinal clash at the BCCI CoE (1) ground here on Monday.

The outing, worthy of a final, came about as a result of Mumbai's shocking collapse against Punjab in its last Elite Group C match at Jaipur on Thursday.

The loss pushed Mumbai to the second spot, robbing the side the chance to finish on top and face Madhya Pradesh in the last-eight.

Karnataka and Mumbai will miss a few key players. For the home side, K.L. Rahul and pacer Prasidh Krishna are absent, having been called up for India duty while Mumbai must make do without Shreyas Iyer and an injured Shardul Thakur.

The showstoppers: Sarfaraz has been batting with gay abandon for Mumbai while Padikkal and Mayank have been the key to Karnataka's fine run. EMMANUAL YOGINI & VIJAY SONEJI

Karnataka, which dominated Elite Group A with six wins in seven matches, boasts of a strong batting unit. Devdutt Padikkal, the leading run-scorer of the tournament, is in red-hot form. Captain Mayank Agarwal is another top-order threat, with two centuries and as many fifties under his belt. Karun Nair started the campaign well, but has not clicked in the last three games.

Mumbai's batting hopes rest on Sarfaraz Khan, who possesses a marauding tournament strike rate of 190.56. Sarfaraz's 20-ball 62 against Punjab put Mumbai in a winning position before Shreyas, Suryakumar Yadav and Shivam Dube let the team down.

At the adjacent BCCI CoE (2) ground, an unbeaten Uttar Pradesh faces Saurashtra.

Aryan Juyal and captain Rinku Singh have been among the runs for Uttar Pradesh, and are backed by the big-hitting Sameer Rizvi and all-rounder Prashant Veer.

Saurashtra has unearthed two standout performers in middle-order batter Sammar Gajjar and fast bowler Ankur Panwar.

The more experienced opening pair of Harvik Desai and Vishvaraj Jadeja can make the most of an even paced BCCI CoE pitch.

Hugely impressive

On Tuesday, Delhi starts as the favourite against Vidarbha in the third quarterfinal. Delhi, which put on a string of commanding shows in the Elite Group D matches held here, counts on a terrific pace trio – Ishant Sharma, Prince Yadav and Navdeep Saini – to blast through the opposition line-up.

The schedule: Quarterfinals:
Monday: Karnataka vs Mumbai (QF1), BCCI CoE (1); Uttar Pradesh vs Saurashtra (QF2), BCCI CoE (2).
Tuesday: Punjab vs Madhya Pradesh (QF3), BCCI CoE (1); Delhi vs Vidarbha (QF4), BCCI CoE (2).
Quarterfinals start at 9 a.m.
Semifinals: Jan. 15: Winner of QF1 vs Winner of QF4, BCCI CoE (1).
Jan. 16: Winner of QF2 vs Winner of QF3, BCCI CoE (1).
Final: Jan. 18: BCCI CoE (1)
Semifinals and final start at 1.30 p.m.

Jadumani proves his mettle after moving to higher weight category

BOXING

Uthra Ganesan
GREATER NOIDA

A month ago, Jadumani Singh won India a silver at the World Boxing Cup Finals in the 50kg. On Saturday, the 21-year-old Manipuri proved he was ready for bigger battles after being crowned the National champion in the 55kg, one of the most competitive categories both in India and in the world.

The move was both strategic and personal – Jadumani had struggled to keep cutting his weight for major competitions, affecting his overall performance but the fact that 55kg is the lowest Olympic weight category also played a big role.

Well-suited: Jadumani has shown he has the credentials to come good in the 55kg category. PTI

"I knew it is very tough to come into 55kg and I had a big point to prove to myself and to everyone, so the win feels really special. To take a five kg leap and win my first senior National medal within a month against the likes of Asian and World Championships medallists including Amit Panghal and Pawan Bartwal shows I deserve to be here. Next up, I hope to qualify and win at the CWG and the Asian Games," Jadumani told *The Hindu*.

"When I first decided to shift, everyone was against it, including my family, who reasoned I did not have the height to succeed here. But I knew I had to; every sportsman dreams of winning at the Olympics or Asian Games and if I can't do that, what's the use of boxing? I even threatened to quit boxing.

Relief

"But I eventually managed to convince my first coach, Leishangthem Chinglen, and also had a lot of support from former World Championship medalist L. Sarita Devi. Our chief coach at SSCB, SK Berwal, also backed me to do well but was also clear that it won't be easy and that if I did participate in 55kg, I had to win gold else it would set me back by a long way. It's a relief now".

Redemption: Poland finally got its hand on the United Cup after finishing runner-up in the past two years. AP

Third time lucky for Poland in United Cup

Reuters
SYDNEY

Poland battled past Switzerland 2-1 in the United Cup final on Sunday to banish the pain of title-round defeats in the previous two editions and secure a long-awaited maiden triumph in the season-opening mixed-team competition.

Victory capped a superb campaign for Poland, which beat last year's champion the United States in the semifinals, and set up Hubert Hurkacz to carry momentum into his singles campaign at the Australian Open that begins on January 18.

The results: Poland bt Switzerland 2-1 (Iga Swiatek lost to Belinda Bencic 6-3, 0-6, 3-6; Hubert Hurkacz bt Stan Wawrinka 6–3, 3–6, 6–3; Katarzyna Kawa & Jan Zielinski bt Bencic & Jakub Paul 6-4, 6-3).

Playmaker: Undav was the go-to man for Stuttgart. REUTERS

Stuttgart proves too good for Leverkusen

EURO LEAGUES

Agence France-Presse
BERLIN

Deniz Undav set up two goals and grabbed one as Stuttgart cruised to a 4-1 win at Bayer Leverkusen in the Bundesliga on Saturday.

The victory took the German Cup holder level on 29 points with third-placed RB Leipzig, but in fifth spot, one behind Leverkusen, on goal difference.

The results: Serie A: Atalanta 2 (De Ketelaere 13, Pasalic 90+5) bt Torino 0; Como 1 (Baturina 90+4) drew with Bologna 1 (Cambiaghi 49); Roma 2 (Kone 77, Soule 79) bt Sassuolo 0; Udinese 2 (Kabasele 19, Davis 40-pen) drew with Pisa 2 (Tramoni 13, Meister 67).

Bundesliga: Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Grimaldo 66-pen) lost to Stuttgart 4 (Leweling 7, 45+1, Mittelstaedt 29-pen, Undav 45+2); Union Berlin 2 (Jeong 77, Doekhi 86) drew with Mainz 2 (Amiri 30, Hollerbach 69); Freiburg 2 (Grifo 53-pen, Matanovic 83) bt Hamburg 1 (Vuskovic 48); Heidenheim 2 (Pieringer 15, Niehues 26) drew with Cologne 2 (Martel 18, El Mala 48).

LaLiga: Real Oviedo 1 (Chaira 64) drew with Real Betis 1 (Lo Celso 83); Villarreal 3 (Moleiro 49, Moreno 55, Mikautadze 75) bt Alaves 1 (Martinez 85); Girona 1 (Vanat 44) bt Osasuna 0; Valencia 1 (Pepelu 87) drew with Elche 1 (Diangana 75).

Soorya ends a nine-year long wait; Double delight for Rahil Pillarisetty

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

Chennai's P.M. Soorya (Chandra LGE Racing) ended a nine-year wait for a National title as he delivered a stunning win in the morning to pocket the championship in the Pro-Stock 200cc Open category, and then cruised to third place in the next outing later in the day, on the concluding day of the MRF MMSC FMSCI Indian National Motorcycle Racing Championship on Sunday.

Hyderabad's Rahil Pillarisetty (RACR Castrol Power1) finished the season with a superb double, emerging champion in the premier Pro-Stock 301-400cc Open category.

The others who clinched the National championship included Chennai's Jagathishree Kumaresan (One Racing) who retained her Girls (Stock 165cc) title, Rajender Beedani (MAI Racing) from Hyderabad who clinched the Stock 165cc (Novice) crown, Coimbatore's Raj Kumar (Motul Sparks Racing) who topped the Super-Sport Intermediate 165cc class for his maiden National title, and Varun Patil (Mad Rabbits Racing) from Bengaluru who took the honours in the Stock 301-400cc (Novice) category.

Nation's best! It was a glorious finale for Raj Kumar, Beedani, Jagathishree, Rahil and Soorya. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The results (Provisional, all six laps): Pro-Stock 301-400cc Open: 1. Rahil Pillarisetty (RACR Castrol Power1) 11:07.296s; 2. Chiranth Vishwanath (Petronas TVS Racing) 11:08.435; 3. Rakshith Dave (Petronas TVS Racing) 11:08.644. **Champion rider:** Rahil Pillarisetty; **champion team:** RACR Castrol Power1.
Pro-Stock 200cc Open: Race-1: 1. P.M. Soorya (Chandra LGE Racing) 11:51.058; 2. Rajkumar (RDX Torque Racing) 11:53.613; 3. Tasmai Cariappa (ISBK Racing) 11:53.942. **Race-2:** 1. Mohan Babu (Rockers Racing) 11:50.789; 2. Venkatesh Iyyappan (Chandra LGE Racing) 11:52.400; 3. P.M. Soorya 11:53.127. **Champion rider:** P.M. Soorya PM; **team:** Chandra LGE Racing.
SuperSport Intermediate Up to 165cc: 1. Raj Kumar (Motul Sparks Racing) 12:40.496; 2. Mohammed Samrul Zubair (Motul Sparks Racing) 12:44.258; 3. G. Balaji (Team C2 Racing) 12:52.169. **Champion rider:** Raj Kumar; **team:** Motul Sparks Racing.
Stock 301-400cc (Novice): 1. Jagadeesh Nagaraj (Motul Sparks Racing) 12:04.950; 2. Kamal Navas (Rockers Racing) 12:09.956; 3. Shreehari Pudel (Mad Rabbit Racing) 12:17.791. **Champion rider:** Varun Patil (Mad Rabbit Racing); **team:** Mad Rabbit Racing.
Stock 165cc (Novice): 1. Lal Nunsunga (Motul Sparks Racing) 13:01.994; 2. Rajender Beedani (MAI Racing) 13:02.102; 3. Vignesh Pothu (MAI Racing) 13:02.324. **Champion rider:** Rajender Beedani; **team:** MAI.
Girls (Stock 165cc, five laps): 1. A.S. Ann Jennifer (Motul Sparks Racing) 08:44.219; 2. Saimah Ajaz Baig (KYT Helmet ISKB Racing) 08:45.285; 3. Jagathishree Kumaresan (One Racing) 08:52.187. **Champion rider:** Jagathishree Kumaresan; **team:** One Racing.
Idemitsu Honda India Talent Cup–Honda CB 300F: 1. B.A. Tejash (Tumakuru) 12:50.270; 2. Amit Prasad (Bengaluru) 12:51.469; 3. R. Solomon (Chennai) 12:58.129. **Champion rider:** R. Solomon. **Petronas TVS One-Make Championship–Open (RR 310):** 1. Manoj Yesuadiyan (Chennai) 11:50.779; 2. G. Balaji (Chennai) 11:50.906; 3. Abdul Baseem (Chennai) 11:51.163. **Champion rider:** Mohan Babu (Chennai). **Rookie (RTR 200):** 1. R. Hari Haran (Coimbatore) 13:09.911; 2. Akarsh Jangam (Vijayawada) 13:29.771; 3. A. Joshua (Bengaluru) 13:29.836. **Champion rider:** R. Hari Haran. **Media (RTR 200):** 1. Saran Kumar (Chennai) 12:50.067; 2. A. Nijin (Pathanamthitta) 12:50.124; 3. H. Basu Sivaraj (Chennai) 13:07.789. **MMSC-Nepal TVS Race (six laps):** 1. Shreehari Poudel 13:23.030; 2. Abhinav Raj Malla 13:23.108; 3. Deelip Danuwar 11:24.675.

Gritty Manush and Ryu take the honours

WTT FEEDER

Sports Bureau
VADODARA

Top seed Manush Shah produced a stirring comeback to edge past a spirited Payas Jain 7-11, 10-12, 11-6, 11-6, 11-8 and clinch his maiden international singles title on home turf, while Korea's Ryu Hanna ended qualifier Anusha Kutumbale's dream run in the women's final with a 11-6, 11-6, 11-5 win on the concluding day of the WTT Feeder international tournament.

Despite the singles defeat, Payas capped a highly productive day by partnering Ankur Bhattacharjee to lift the men's doubles title and teaming up with Syndrela Das to win the mixed doubles crown.

Ryu continued her dominant run through the tournament, never allowing Kutumbale to settle into a rhythm and closing out the match decisively to seal the title.

The results:
Women: Final: Ryu Hanna (Kor) bt Anusha Kutumbale 11-6, 11-6, 11-5.
Semifinals: Ryu bt Syndrela Das 11-4, 8-11, 7-11, 11-4, 11-9; Anusha Kutumbale bt Sutirtha Mukherjee 12-10, 11-5, 16-14.
Men: Final: Manush Shah bt Payas Jain 7-11, 10-12, 11-6, 11-6, 11-8.
Semifinals: Payas bt Akash Pal 11-5, 12-10, 11-9; Manush bt SFR Snehit 6-11, 11-9, 14-12, 11-5.
Doubles (finals): Women: Yoo Yerin & Ryu Hanna (Kor) bt Ayhika Mukherjee & Sutirtha Mukherjee 4-11, 11-9, 11-9, 4-11, 11-9.
Men: Ankur Bhattacharjee & Payas Jain bt Akash Pal & Mudit Dani 12-10, 11-7, 7-11, 11-8.
Mixed: Payas Jain & Syndrela Das bt Harmeet Desai & Yashaswini Ghorpade 8-11, 11-9, 11-3, 11-6.

Grand finish: Manush, Syndrela and Payas brought cheer to the home fans. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Super Sunday: The Railways hoopsters proved unstoppable. R. RAGU

Indian Railways reigns supreme with twin titles

The men dash Tamil Nadu's hat-trick hopes by cashing in on the home team's poor shooting; the women survive a late scare from Kerala to clinch their eighth consecutive crown

NATL. BASKETBALL

S. Dipak Ragav
CHENNAI

It was double delight for the Indian Railways at the 75th senior National basketball championship at the Nehru Indoor Stadium on Sunday.

In the women's section, Railways defeated Kerala 75-66 to clinch its eighth consecutive crown and 41st overall.

In the men's category, Railways dethroned defending champion Tamil Nadu, which was going for a hat-trick of titles, 77-69.

For Railways, it was a collective effort led by Arvinder Singh, who topped the scoring with 18 points. He was well supported by the likes of Kanwar Gurbaz Singh Sandhu and skipper Palpreet Singh, helping Railways reclaim the big prize it last won in 2010.

During the pre-match training routine, TN players' shooting was off-target, almost a sign of things to come. In the first quarter, as Railways nailed their shots, TN fluffed a simple one and allowed the visitors to take a 20-7 lead that it never relinquished.

The Railways' defence too was impressive and never allowed the likes of A. Anantharaj and Muin Bek Hafeez find space to nail the three-pointers.

For TN, only Arvind Kumar Muthukrishnan scored 29 points, but the others failed to step up.

Earlier in the evening, the Railways women were stretched by a spirited Kerala team in a fiercely contested match, fitting of a summit clash.

The teams were neck and neck for most parts of the match until late in the final quarter. Trailing 61-47, Kerala scored 10 points on the bounce and quickly narrowed the gap to just three points in the middle of the fourth quarter.

However, Railways hit back, scoring nine points in a row to swell the lead back to 12, which helped it defend its crown.

In the play-off matches, Delhi beat Uttar Pradesh 70-61 and Tamil Nadu eased past Madhya Pradesh (76-49) to clinch the bronze in the men's and women's sections respectively.

The results (finals):
Women: Indian Railways 75 (K.B. Harshitha 23, Pushpa Senthilkumar 22, P. Priyanka 11, Dharshini Thirunavukkarasu 10) bt Kerala 66 (Sreekala Rani 26, Kavitha Jose 22, Aneesh Cleetus 10).
Men: Indian Railways 77 (Arvinder Singh 18, Kanwar Gurbaz Singh Sandhu 14, Sahaij Pratap Singh Sekhon 14, Palpreet Singh Brar 12, Princepal Singh 10) bt Tamil Nadu 69 (Arvind Kumar Muthukrishnan 29, Baladhaneshwar Poiyamozhi 13).

Fighting spirit sees Ward come back from a serious injury

HOCKEY

S. Prasanna Venkatesan
CHENNAI

There are days when sports careers are shaped by years of hard work, and others when everything turns on a fraction of a second.

For Sam Ward, that day came in 2019, during Great Britain's Olympic qualifier against Malaysia. The British forward was struck full in the face by an 80 kph shot from teammate Harry Martin. The impact left him with facial fractures and cost him 70% of the vision in his left eye.

"I had my face taken off. My whole face. They cut, like, the whole way over the top of the head. There's a scar straight through. They take your face off and rebuild it," he said on the sidelines of the Hockey India League (HIL) here recently.

"Four or five (metal) plates. Thirty-one screws." All still there.

A mask has become part of his playing identity. "It's to protect the good eye. You don't want to go blind completely," said the HIL GC player.

Retirement felt inevitable, but an "inner fight" refused to let go. Ward had to retrain his brain for depth perception.

"So, one of your eyes is more dominant. That will pick up the depth, and the other one sees. And obviously, as soon as you lose the depth side of it, which I did, then you've got to kind of retrain the brain, and it kind of refocuses and sees things coming at different speeds and stuff.

"You've got to retrain the brain for depth perception. I had to stop a lot of hockey balls. Lots of trapping. Even just catching, just seeing balls," he explained.

In February last year, Ward became the highest goal-scorer for England or Great Britain, a milestone that underlined his ability to evolve after trauma.

Standing on the pitch today – mask on, vision reset, hunger intact – he represents choice. The choice to continue, to adapt, and to believe that even when one way of seeing the world is lost, another can still be learned.

Steely resolve: A mask has become part of Ward's playing identity. R. RAGU

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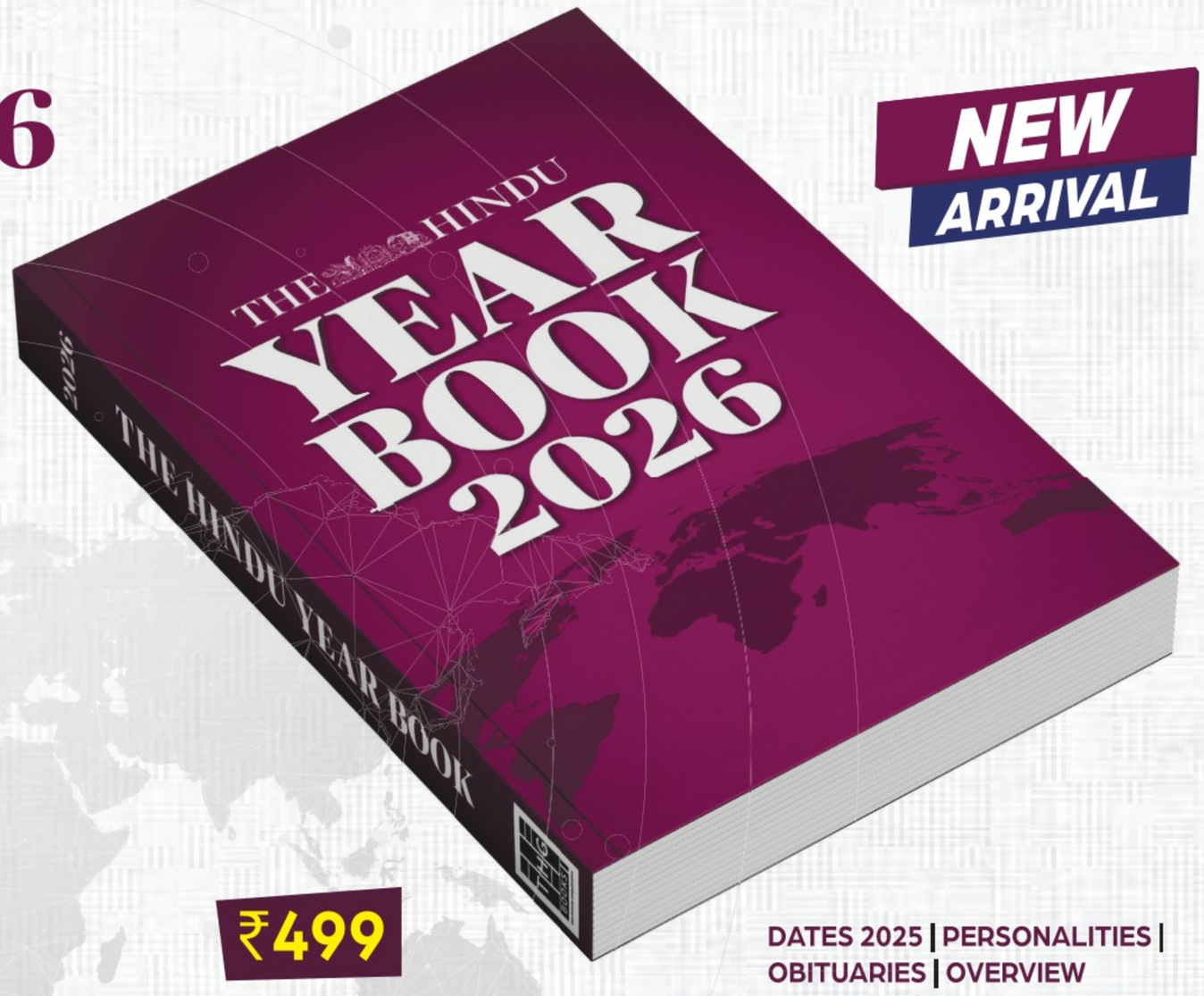

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